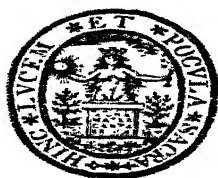


# INDIA IN OUTLINE

BY  
LADY HARTOG



CAMBRIDGE  
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
1944

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

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For permission to reproduce the photographs mentioned below, the author and publishers wish to express their thanks to the High Commissioner for India (Nos. 1-4, 11, 14-16, 18); the Director, Victoria and Albert Museum (Nos. 5, 9, 10); H.E.H. the Nizam's Government, Hyderabad (No. 13); Mr H. R. Ferger (No. 20); Mr St Nihal Singh (No. 23); and also to Mr Paul Popper (Nos. 6-8, 17, 19); Fox Photos (No. 12); Sports and General Press Agency (No. 24); Planet News (Nos. 26, 27).

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## PREFACE

This small book is intended to serve as an introduction to India, and to provide a background for further reading.

Without some basis of knowledge it is difficult for the general reader to follow the arguments in the many recent books and articles on the subject of India, written from widely differing political stand-points; and I have endeavoured to make my story an objective one.

In so short a summary the treatment of every aspect is necessarily inadequate. Of this I am acutely conscious, yet I hope that the book may prove a small contribution to a wider understanding of India and Indian problems, of such urgent importance at this time.

I wish to express here my sincere thanks to all those authors whose work I have consulted, and of which I have made free use, and also to Sir Frank Noyce, K.C.S.I., to Sir Frank Brown, C.I.E., to Sir Harry Lindsay, K.C.I.E., and to Mr Humfrey Grose-Hodge for their valued help and advice.

My further thanks are due to the Cambridge University Press for the great trouble they have taken in the production of the book, and to Mr K. de B. Codrington and others who have helped me to obtain the photographs for my illustrations.

I should add that I have incorporated in this *Outline* parts of my earlier book *Living India*, which though out of print is still in demand.

MABEL HARTOG

March, 1944

## CHAPTER I

### INDIA & THE INDIANS

IN thinking of India perhaps the first thing is to fix in one's mind that India is a country on a grand scale containing nearly one-fifth of the human race. Often called a sub-continent, and cut off from the rest of Asia by the great barrier of the Himalayas, it is in actual size as large as the whole of Europe without Russia, nearly eighteen times as large as Great Britain. Within India's wide borders were formerly many separate countries and kingdoms of which the inhabitants differed—and they still differ—from each other in race, language, and customs as much as, say, the Swedes from the Spaniards. Within her borders are to be found types of climate, of scenery, and of vegetation as varied as those of the continent of Europe. India has some of the mightiest mountains in the world; some of the greatest plains, stretching right across the north; some of the longest rivers; some of the driest desert. Yet the wettest place in the whole world is in Assam with an average rainfall of over 420 inches a year (as compared with under 26 inches in London). In parts of the south, there is moist tropical heat all the year round; in parts of the north, as in the hill country round Simla, the summer capital of the Government of India, snow lies thick on the ground for months at a time.

Nature is both far grander and far sterner than we know her in this country of ours. Earthquakes, cyclones, devastating floods, India has, and has ever had, her full share of all these, though each affects only a limited area at any one time. In 1934 and 1935 two disastrous earthquakes, one in the Province of Bihar and one on the North-West Frontier, involved the loss of many thousands of lives. As recently as October 1942 a cyclone in Bengal laid waste a large tract, killed over 10,000 people and 75,000 cattle. Houses fell as though made of paper; trees were uprooted and blown about like straws. But there are only a few areas liable to cyclones.

Over the greater part of the country the rainfall is normally brought by the south-west monsoon between the months of June and October, while at other times of the year there is scarcely any rain. A special character of the monsoon is its liability to 'fail'. In years gone by, before the building of railways and development of irrigation, whenever the monsoon failed, famine followed. Millions in India have died from famine, millions from disease sweeping the countryside.

When trying to visualise India one must learn to think in millions. Partly no doubt because scourges like famine, cholera, and plague have been controlled, and welfare services have been developing, the population has been increasing at a remarkable rate. In 1881 it was under 254 millions. In 1941 it had reached nearly 400 millions, more than three times the population of the United States. The 1941 Census shows that 50 millions have been added in the ten years since 1931. Several of the great Provinces of British India (Bengal, Madras, and the United Provinces) have a population larger than that of Great Britain, so that when one talks of Provinces, one must bear in mind that they are more like countries in themselves.

British India is made up of eleven of these Provinces, covering rather more than half (9/16) of the whole country, while rather less than half (7/16) is the territory of the Indian States, still governed to-day, as in the past, by Indian Princes. As will be seen from the map, the States are not concentrated either in the north or the south but are distributed over the length and breadth of India; and about a quarter of the entire population comes under their rule. This adds to the complexity of the political problem, for it is obvious that there can be no settlement for the government of India as a whole without taking into consideration the position of the States.

A further complexity arises from the diversity of the peoples of India in race, religion, and language. From prehistoric times, invaders of many races have come down through the passes of the north-west and have settled in the fertile plains. Roughly speaking

the peoples of the north may be regarded as the descendants of the early, so-called 'Aryan' invaders (who brought with them the religion and civilisation which has grown into Hinduism), and of the invaders of later centuries, Scythians, Turks, and Mongols. The peoples south of the Vindhya Mountains, where there was much less penetration by invaders, may be regarded as the descendants of the more ancient inhabitants of the peninsula, known as the Dravidians. While adopting Hinduism, they retained their own languages and many of their own customs and institutions. Some of the aboriginal races fled into hiding in the hills and forests before successive invaders, and have continued there to live a tribal life, almost untouched by the changing civilisation of the centuries.

No country in the world shows so great a variety among its peoples as India. One could hardly find more striking physical contrasts than those between the men of some of the martial races of the Punjab, tall and splendidly proportioned, many of them magnificent specimens of humanity, and the quite short, much darker-skinned races of the south; or again, between the stocky Mongolian types of Assam and the north-east with flat faces, broad nostrils, and slanting eyes, and the Pathans of the North-West Frontier Province with their powerful physique and strongly marked features. Famous in Indian history are the Rajputs—the proudest and most ancient warrior race of Hindustan—whose chiefs still rule in the States of Rajputana to-day, and the annals of whose valour and chivalry challenge comparison with those of any country in the world; the Marathas are a fighting race of Western India of more humble origin who rose to great power in the eighteenth century. The Bengalis are distinct in racial type from the Madrasis, and so on.

But many as are the differences between the peoples of the various Provinces and States in racial origin, language, customs, and dress, the majority are united by the bond of Hinduism. And Hinduism is not only a religion, it is an all-embracing social system which has no parallel in any other country. About two-



thirds of the entire population of India belong to the Hindu community. They form the majority in all the larger Provinces except Bengal and the Punjab, as well as in all the larger States except Kashmir.

The other great community is that of the Mohammedans, who form a quarter of the whole population (94½ millions). They are partly the descendants of the Turkish and Mongol invaders who poured over the passes into India at intervals from the eleventh century onwards, and partly of the peoples converted by them. To the former class belong the Pathans, who are closely allied to the Afghans, and to the latter the Mohammedans of Bengal, who are of a very different physical type. The Mohammedans are still mainly concentrated in the north of India, though for several centuries their rule and culture extended far into the south. To-day they form the bulk of the population in the North-West Frontier Province, in Sind, and in the State of Kashmir; and rather more than half the population of the great Provinces of Bengal and the Punjab. There are over 8 millions of them in the United Provinces, large numbers in Assam and Bihar, and a smaller proportion in Bombay and Madras. The great State of Hyderabad has a Mohammedan ruler but the majority of the population are Hindus.

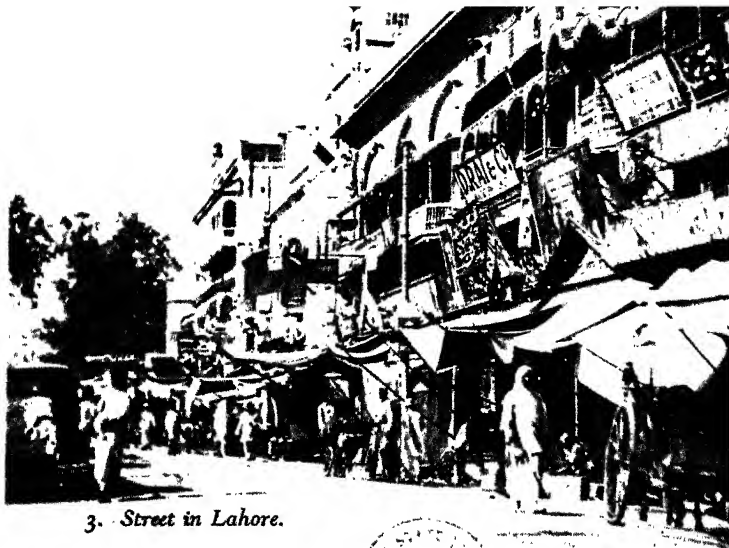
Compared with the Hindus and Mohammedans the minority communities are very small, but some of them have an influence out of all proportion to their numbers. Such a minority are the Sikhs, about 6 millions, concentrated almost entirely in the Province of the Punjab and the adjoining Punjab States. The Sikhs left Hinduism in the sixteenth century and later became organised on a political and military basis. They have no caste, do not worship idols, do not cut their hair, and do not smoke. Under their great leader Ranjit Singh, they became the founders of an important kingdom in the north, and remained the dominant power in the Punjab until its annexation in 1849. The principles and doctrines of their faith are recorded in their holy book, called the Granth Sahib, which is kept in the Golden Temple at Amritsar,



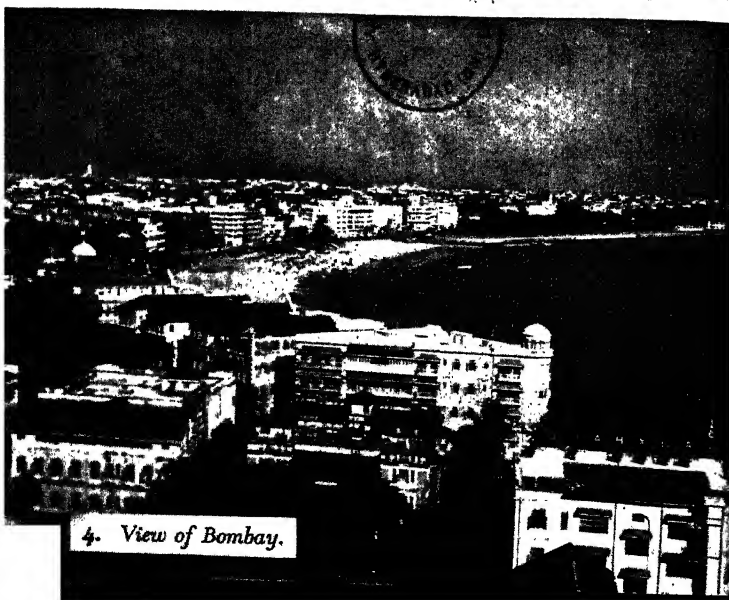
*Village India, 1.*



*Village India, 2.*



3. *Street in Lahore.*



4. *View of Bombay.*

and railways bringing contact with the outside world that times began to change, and the isolation of the village to break down. It is still the social unit, an orderly community respecting the authority of its headman, often with its own artisans, weaver and potter, blacksmith and carpenter, and its village servants. But with the ever-growing population the pressure on the land has become very great, and the peasant often gets from it no more than the barest subsistence. He accepts this as in the nature of things and does not complain, but the dire poverty of the masses of rural India is perhaps the greatest of all problems facing governments in India, whether British or Indian.

Artisans and labourers are no longer tied to the villages of their birth, but can seek employment further afield, and the new Census of 1941 shows a decided growth in the population of the towns corresponding with the new growth of industry. In 1931 there were only 11 per cent of the whole population classified as town-dwellers, and fewer than forty towns in the whole of India had more than 100,000 inhabitants. In ten years another twenty-three towns have passed the 100,000 mark.

India's two great cities, Calcutta and Bombay, both busy centres of shipping, of commerce, and of industry, have grown larger still. The population of Calcutta, second city of the British Empire, has reached 2 millions. It has fine streets and shops, parks, monuments, and public buildings, to which the poorer quarters of the town with their narrow, untidy lanes and squalid dwellings offer a sharp contrast, though they have been considerably improved of recent years. The same is true of Bombay, which is more tropical in setting, but cooled by breezes from the sea. Its harbour is one of the finest in Asia, and the city is thronged by many different types both from the East and from the West. The two next largest towns—Madras and Hyderabad (Deccan)—are only half the size of Bombay. Hyderabad is the fourth city of India and far the largest town of the Indian States.

In the towns all over India, although houses of more than two stories are the exception, the poor live crowded up in dark and

parent of the modern languages of Northern and Central India (just as Latin is of French, Spanish, and Italian). By far the most widely spoken is Hindi, which in its various forms is understood over a very large area, while Urdu, which is closely related to it, is the common language or *lingua franca* for Mohammedans all over India. Urdu is really largely Hindi written in a Persian script. Both are often commonly referred to as Hindustani. Tamil and Telugu, the chief Dravidian languages of the south, have no relation at all to Hindi and the Indo-Aryan languages of the north.

Thus it is that the teaching of English in the secondary schools (it has never been taught in the primary schools) has had a remarkable effect in promoting the unity of the whole country. It has brought together the educated classes of different regions and enabled them to exchange thoughts and ideas. It has been one of the most powerful influences in welding India together and in creating the Indian 'nation'. During the last few years there has been a great campaign in favour of adopting Hindi as a universal language to be made compulsory in all schools, but it is meeting with much opposition both from Mohammedans, and from the speakers of the Dravidian tongues for whose children it would mean a special burden. India will always need a language for use in her relations with the outer world, and English remains the obvious language for this purpose.

Another bond which unites the great masses of the people of India, whether Hindu or Mohammedan, Sikh or Christian, is the fact that they are countryfolk, peasants getting their living from the soil. They live in countless villages, and towns are few and far between. From time immemorial the life of the people has been based on the village community. Independent units, self-contained and self-governing, they persisted through the centuries little changed by wars and the succession of different rulers. The village was complete in itself and was left to manage its own affairs through its council (*panchayat*) provided that it paid the land-tax demanded by the governing power. It was only with the building of roads

ill-ventilated rooms. Yet, in spite of overcrowding, town-dwellers have certain advantages over the peasants in the villages. They have a clean water supply and sanitation provided. They are within easy reach of hospitals and health services, and of good schools for the children, besides other amenities of town life.

And this brings us to another of the great divisions among the peoples of India—the division between the educated and uneducated. The masses of the peasantry are still illiterate. Over the whole country only about a fifth of the men and a twentieth of the women can read and write in any language. But education has been long organised and has made rapid progress in recent years; the Indian universities produce men and women of highly trained intellect and ability, fully abreast of modern theories in economics and politics and the latest developments of science.

India is indeed a land of contrasts in every phase of life. Therein lies the origin of many of her troubles and of much of her enthralling interest. And in spite of all her variety and diversity there is an underlying unity between her peoples. More and more they are becoming conscious of the common inheritance which binds them together and which distinguishes them from all other peoples of the world.

## CHAPTER II

### INDIAN CUSTOMS & CULTURE

HINDUS are justly proud of their ancient culture and civilisation, so much more ancient than that of the West. The earliest form of the Hindu religion is to be found in the Vedas of the Aryans, a collection of hymns and prayers addressed to the powers of Nature, which were composed in Sanskrit, probably about 1500 B.C., and passed on from generation to generation. The Vedas were followed by many other sacred writings, and notably by the two great Hindu epics, the *Ramayana* (probably compiled in its present form about the fifth century B.C.) which describes the adventures of Prince Rama and his faithful wife Sita, still told to every Hindu child, and the *Mahabharata*, of which the hero is the god Krishna. The *Mahabharata* includes Krishna's 'Song of the Adorable One', called the *Bhagavad-gita*, which is considered the finest of Hindu religious writings.

Under the influence of the priests of the Aryans, known as Brahmins (or Brahmins), Hinduism and Hindu culture spread over the whole sub-continent, assimilating to itself local cults, and admitting the worship of countless gods and goddesses. But philosophic Hinduism sees in the idol only one of a myriad representations of the Universal Spirit, the one Supreme Power, which is not only the soul of all Nature, but of which all individual souls are part. The individual soul comes from the universal soul and will be reabsorbed into the universal soul, but it has first to work out its destiny by passing through a whole series of existences on earth. In each existence its *karma* or actions will influence its next rebirth. According to his status in life every man has his special duties, or *dharma*, but the highest spiritual illumination is to be gained by the complete subduing of self and the annihilation of all human desire. It is not action in this world, but release from action, which is the goal of the pious Hindu, and traditionally

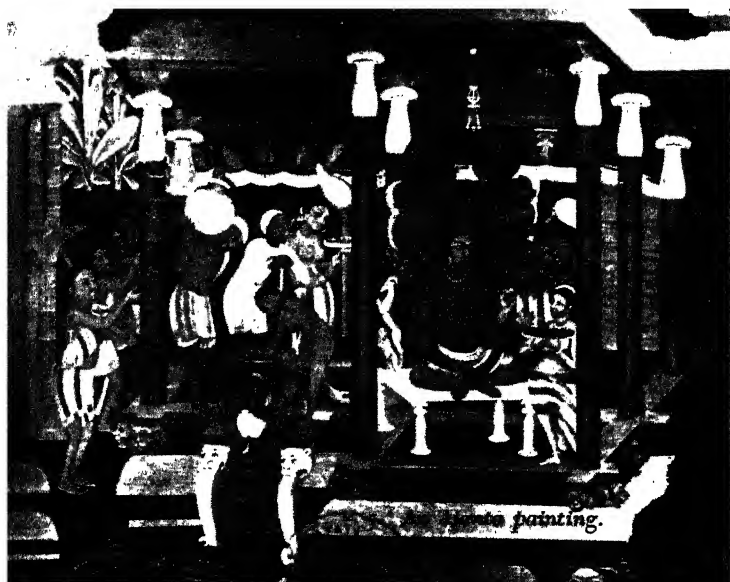
the holy man is an ascetic who renounces all worldly possessions and spends his life in meditation, perhaps in the holy city of Benares, perhaps in some far Himalayan shrine.

The sacred literature of Hinduism is full of subtle philosophical speculation on the nature of man and of the universe, and all through the centuries the Brahmans have kept alive the traditions of Hindu learning and philosophy. But Hinduism is far more than a religion. It is a social system which permeates the whole life of the people. Two of its chief features, the caste system and the hereditary priesthood of the Brahmans, go back at least three thousand years, and it provides elaborate rules of conduct and ceremonial for all occasions in life from birth to death. These were collected in the famous law book known as the Code of Manu, the law-giver, which dates from about the beginning of the Christian era.

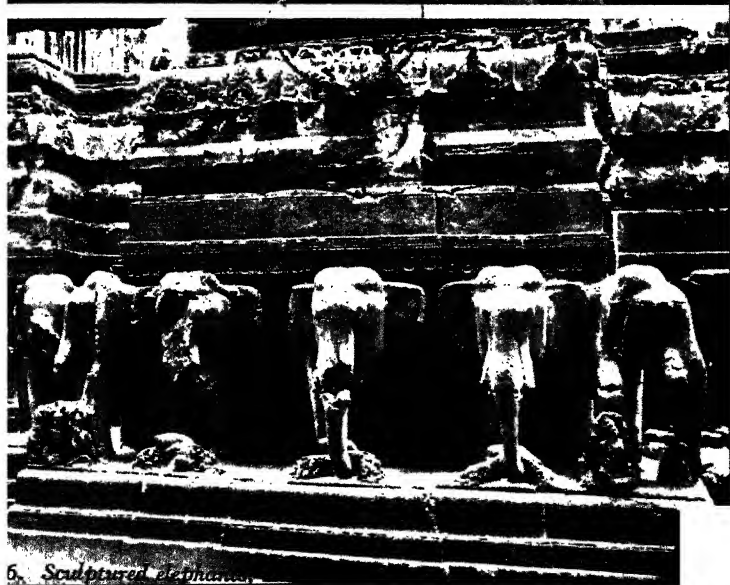
But already in the sixth century B.C. Hinduism and the power of the Brahmans had been challenged by a new religion, Buddhism. It has influenced India profoundly, and spread to many other countries, but in India, the land of its birth, it was, after some centuries, gradually absorbed by Hinduism.

From Vedic times onwards the whole of Hindu society has been divided into hereditary groups or castes. The four originally mentioned are (1) the *Brahmans* or priests, (2) the *Kshatriyas* or warriors, (3) the *Vaisyas* or merchants, and (4) the *Sudras* or labourers and servants. The caste system has persisted until the present day, but the number of castes has been so greatly multiplied in the course of time that each occupation and calling has come to have a caste of its own, traders, weavers, barbers, goldsmiths, and so on, and there are now some thousands of castes and sub-castes. Among the orthodox, the members of one caste may not marry into another caste, or sit down to eat with any caste but their own, but caste restrictions have been much relaxed of recent years, especially in the towns and as the result of railway travel. Still the institution of caste persists. All priests are still Brahmans, though Brahmans are to be found in many professions

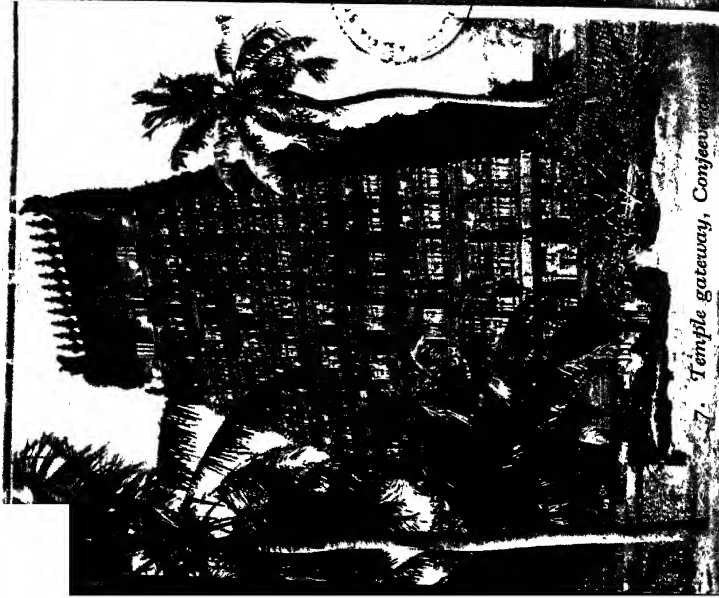




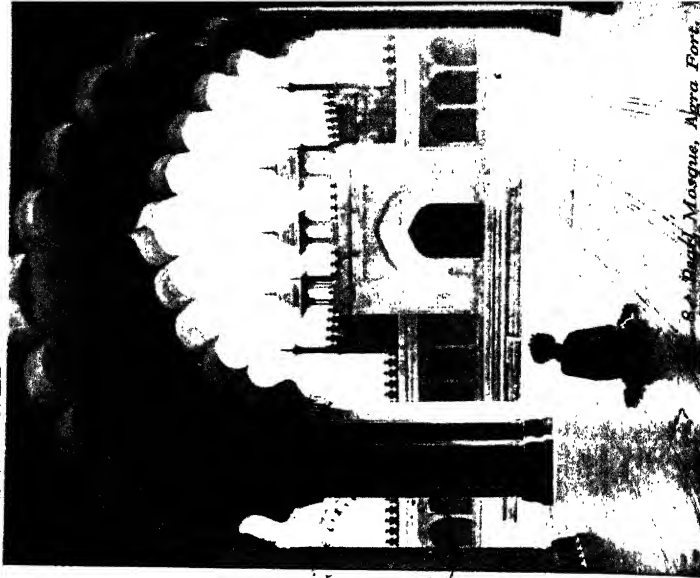
*Wall painting.*



6. *Sculptured elephants.*



7. Temple gateway, Conjeevaram



8. Dargah Masque, Akra Fort.

as teachers, lawyers, journalists, and politicians, in Government services as well as in humbler walks of life. They continue to be looked up to with respect, and often fear, by those born into lower circles of the social system.

And for the Hindu millions who still worship idols of wood and stone, religion is largely tinged with superstition and fear—fear of the Brahmans, fear of the anger of gods and goddesses of unknown power, who can withhold the precious rain or spread pestilence on the earth. Devotion to the god Vishnu in his incarnations of Rama and of Krishna is probably the most popular form of the Hindu religion to-day. Hundreds of thousands go on pilgrimages to holy places and to bathe in the waters of sacred rivers like the Ganges and the Godavari, for bathing as a purification has a great part in Hindu ceremonial. More than a million pilgrims each year visit the ancient city of Benares, the heart of Hindu India, and many an orthodox Hindu goes there to end his days.

Another of the oldest characteristics of Hinduism is reverence for the cow, which is universally regarded as a sacred animal. No Hindu will eat beef, nor may any cattle be killed by Hindus even when they are old or sick. The Jains, who belong to an ancient sect of Hinduism, will not knowingly take any form of life, even that of an insect.

But Hinduism is a religion of tolerance, absorbing many forms of worship into its broad fold, and not seeking to impose its beliefs on others. Yet, strangely, it is Hinduism that from time immemorial has kept in subjection some 50 millions of unfortunate people attached to the Hindu community, but who are by birth at the bottom of the caste scale, below the lowest rung of the caste ladder. They are generally known as the Depressed Classes or Untouchables, because their touch—and in some regions even their shadow—is pollution to an orthodox Brahman. In official publications they are now called the Scheduled Castes. Solely through the accident of birth they suffer from grievous disabilities and are expected to perform the menial tasks for the rest of the

community. They are the scavengers, sweepers, washermen, workers in hides and leather, and so forth. They may not draw water from the same wells, and in general may not enter the same temples, as the caste Hindu.

Until quite recent years they were not allowed into the ordinary schools; and where there were no special schools for them, they had to pick up what they could from outside the class-room. Their first friends were the missionaries, and many thousands have become converts to Christianity, especially in South India where the influence of the Brahmans is very strong, and where the lot of the Depressed Classes is worse than elsewhere. Several Provinces have a number of special schools for them, but publicly managed schools receiving Government grants are now bound to admit them, and in the last few years some free places and scholarships have been awarded to them. They themselves are beginning to demand better treatment, and the chance of entering other occupations than those to which they have been limited in the past.

Many Hindu social reformers have taken up their cause in recent years, and Mr Gandhi has been one of the foremost workers for the removal of 'untouchability'. *Harijan*, the name for 'untouchable' which he has adopted, and which he has given to his weekly paper, means 'child of God'. But the old prejudice is too strong to be lightly overcome. In many of the temples to which Mr Gandhi's appeal secured them entry a few years ago they are still not admitted at the times when the caste Hindus go to worship.

The Depressed Classes have volunteered in large numbers for the fighting services and form a large percentage of India's industrial workers. Their best-known leader, Dr Ambedkar, is now Labour member in the Government of India. He fears to trust their fate to the caste Hindus, and expressed his attitude in a speech in September 1942 when he said: 'I do not want to escape subjection to the British only to fall a victim to complete domination by Hindus.'

Mr Gandhi owes much of his magnetic sway over the Hindu masses because in the simplicity of his personal life and his religious mysticism he embodies for them the ideal of the holy man. But among the many highly educated and intellectual Hindus of to-day there is a sharp division between those who wish to preserve the ancient structure and beliefs of Hinduism, and those who would like to sweep much of them away, and especially the whole caste system. The first group have their own organisation, the Hindu Mahasabha; many of the second group are to be found among the younger members of the Indian National Congress.

No two religions and cultures could perhaps present stronger contrasts than do the Hindu and Mohammedan. The Mohammedan or Moslem religion (also known as Islam) is more familiar to us in the West than Hinduism. It was founded by the prophet Mohammed in the seventh century A.D. His teachings are embodied in the Koran or Mohammedan Bible, written in Arabic, and Indian Moslems attach great importance to the teaching of the Koran to their children. Whereas the Hindu worships many gods, or at any rate many manifestations of one God, the Mohammedan worships one God, Allah, and one God only, and abominates idols. Whereas all the great Hindu temples are decorated with masses of sculptured figures, in a Mohammedan mosque the representation of any living creature is forbidden, and the great Moslem buildings are decorated entirely with floral and geometrical designs or with texts in ornamental script. Whereas Hinduism divides men into groups by caste, Mohammedanism is in theory perhaps the most democratic of all religions and admits of no distinction between man and man. Far from there being a priestly caste there is not even any definite priesthood. To the Mohammedans the pig is unclean, and the cow is not sacred—they slaughter cows for food and, at certain festivals, for sacrifice.

In spite of these fundamental religious differences members of the two communities live peaceably side by side for years at a time. Then perhaps all at once a communal riot will break out,

often with much loss of life, and perfectly harmless citizens will be done to death. The spark to the tinder has generally been in the past the killing of a cow by Mohammedans, or the playing of music by a Hindu procession in front of a Mohammedan mosque, but of recent years some communal rioting has had a political origin. From the beginning of the war till the end of 1942 nearly 500 people were killed and nearly 2000 injured in communal riots. Among the educated classes it is not so much differences of religion and tradition as rival claims for posts under Government and political influence that produce communal bitterness. The number of qualified Mohammedan candidates for Government service is not proportionate to their percentage of the population. For various reasons they are still considerably behind the Hindus in education, especially in the higher stages, though they have been making up leeway in recent years. And the Mohammedans do not forget that for five hundred years they were the rulers of a great part of India.

In social customs there are both likenesses and differences between the two communities. Among the Hindus life has been based for centuries on what is known as the 'joint family system'. According to this system when the sons marry they do not set up a separate household, but the young wife comes to live in her husband's home. Very likely there may be relatives of an earlier generation already forming part of the household, so that as many as twenty or thirty or even more persons may be living under one roof. The owners of property and the wage-earners feel it an obligation and a duty to support them all. Owing to the rapid changes of recent years the joint-family system has to a considerable extent broken down, but family devotion and affection remain outstanding features of Hindu life, indeed of Indian life generally among all communities. There is no public assistance in India and old people are always cared for by the younger generation.

For town and village alike, for Hindu and for Moslem, weddings are a great event, celebrated with processions, with feasting

and with music, often continued right through the night; and an amount of money will be spent on them which is frequently out of all proportion to the income of the head of the family, especially among the poorer classes. The marriage of women in India is almost universal. According to the Census of 1941 there were 13 million more males in the population than females. In practice there is very little polygamy in India to-day, except among some of the ruling families and a few wealthy landowners, though it is allowable both among Hindus and Mohammedans. The number of wives a Mohammedan may have is limited to four.

Child-marriage is associated with Hinduism, and among orthodox Hindus marriages are often arranged when the children concerned are in their cradles. These marriages are of the nature of irrevocable betrothals, but actual marriages of girls between the ages of ten and fourteen are quite common, especially in rural India, not only among Hindus but in some Provinces also among the poorer classes of Mohammedans, particularly in Bengal. In 1930 an Act (commonly known as the Sarda Act<sup>1</sup>) sponsored by many progressive members of the Indian public, both men and women, and supported by the Government of India, was passed to penalise the marriage of girls under the age of fourteen and of boys under eighteen. The mere passing of an Act cannot put an end to a custom so deeply ingrained unless it has the sanction of public opinion behind it, but education has already resulted in raising the age of marriage among the middle classes, and it is fitting that this measure should have been added to other measures of social reform.

Among caste Hindus a widow does not re-marry, even a child widow who may never have lived with her husband. Widow re-marriage was made legal many years ago, but it is still extremely rare, and the lot of a Hindu widow is very hard. She often becomes little more than a drudge in the family of her husband, but of recent years homes for the training of Hindu widows in home industry, and as teachers, midwives, and nurses, have been opened

<sup>1</sup> From the name of its chief promoter, Rai Sahib Harbilas Sarda.

in many centres all over the country. One of the oldest and best known of these is the organisation in Poona called the Seva Sadan, which continues to do splendid work. Among Moham-medans there is no objection to the re-marriage of widows.

The custom of *purdah* or the seclusion of women is a Moham-medan custom, but it was also adopted by large numbers of Hindus, especially in Northern India. It is still widely practised by the Mohammedans, and means that after eight or ten years of age a girl may not see any men except those of her own family. A *purdah* woman either does not go out at all, or only in a closed vehicle, or covered in a bag-like garment called a *burka*. The custom never gained much hold in the south of India or among the agricultural classes, and with the spread of education and modern ideas it is gradually breaking down. Every year now sees more Mohammedan women discarding *purdah*, while among the Hindus progress has been very rapid. For this due credit must be given to the impulse of the nationalist movement, which has always stood for sex equality. Its leaders have encouraged women to come out from seclusion and to take an active part in work for the nationalist cause.

In spite of the disabilities of women in India the mother has always exerted great influence within the home, and the love and respect shown to her by her sons is perhaps unequalled in any other country. Among the middle classes it is she who controls the purse, and her advice is sought in all difficulties. Her early training is a severe one, but it results in giving her the dignity, gentleness, and selflessness which are the charm of so many Indian women.

At the time of the establishment of British rule, education for women was not considered either necessary or desirable, and the modern education and emancipation of Indian womanhood is the direct result of impact with the West. It dates from the opening of the first schools for girls by missionaries and by Government in the early part of the nineteenth century. But there were learned and cultured women in India centuries ago, just as there



have been famous women rulers, both Hindu and Moslem, in the long course of Indian history.

In the realms of literature and of the arts Hindu culture is as distinctive as in Hindu philosophy. Religion and mythology form the main sources of inspiration. Sanskrit literature ranks among the great literatures of the world, and its classical period was in the fourth to fifth century A.D. It found imaginative expression in plays, in poetry, and in prose romances, besides a great body of philosophical and religious writings. By common consent the dominating figure among Sanskrit poets and dramatists of the period is Kalidasa. His famous romantic play, *Sakuntala*, considered the finest of classical Sanskrit dramas, still delights modern audiences.

Next to Sanskrit the greatest Indian literature is in Tamil, dating from the first centuries of the Christian era. It is known that from very early times the Tamil States of the far south conducted a prosperous foreign trade and had reached a high degree of material civilisation, and this is mirrored in the works of the early Tamil poets.

As the use of Sanskrit declined as a living language, the vernacular languages derived from it became the medium of literary expression; and war-ballads, songs, and legends were succeeded in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by a great production of popular religious poetry. Outstanding names are those of Kabir and Tulsi Das. Kabir (by birth probably a Mohammedan) attempts in his poetic writings to unite Hindus and Moslems in the common worship of one God. Tulsi Das, the greatest poet of the sixteenth century, retold the story of the Sanskrit epic *Ramayana* in Hindi verse, which is the popular version still widely read and recited to-day.

With the Moslem invasions into India came also the cultural influence of Islam. The Mohammedans brought with them Persian literature, and with it knowledge of the achievements of the Arabs in arts and science. There is little doubt that the re-

ligious thought of Islam had a direct influence on new religious movements in India from the fourteenth century onwards, such as that of Kabir, and of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion. Persian continued to be the language of cultured Indian Moslems, and was used as the language of the law courts up till 1837, studied by Hindus and Mohammedans alike. Thousands of Persian words found their way into the Indian vernaculars. The Urdu language, or language of the 'camp', a mixture of Hindi with Persian and Arabic words, grew out of the early contacts between Hindus and Moslems, and gradually developed a considerable literature of its own, which is rich in poetry. Muhammad Iqbal, the best known Mohammedan poet of twentieth-century India, wrote poems both in Urdu and in Persian.

In the vernacular languages the creation of modern literature dates from the nineteenth century. The lead was given by writers in Bengali, and among them the name of Rabindranath Tagore, who died in 1940, is known all over the world.

Music is an art that has been cultivated in India since ancient times, based on an elaborate tonic system of its own with very small intervals. Characteristic of Indian music is the *rag* or theme of melody for each appointed time and season. There is a wealth of musical instruments, and forms of the harp and the lute (*vina*) are depicted in very early sculptures. A number of new instruments were introduced from Persia by the Moslems, and the two communities have each enriched the other's art.

Of architecture, sculpture, and painting there have been many Indian schools. Some of the finest artistic treasures that have survived to the present day are to be found in the caves of Ajanta and in the rock-cut temples of Ellora, both in Hyderabad State. The caves of Ajanta are mainly the work of Buddhist monks between the first and sixth centuries A.D. At the head of a rocky valley twenty-nine chambers have been cut out of the solid rock of the cliff-face. Some of them, the 'cathedral' caves, were used as chapels, and have a vaulted roof, and pillars separating nave from aisles. Others were monastery halls. All are decorated with

sculptures, with carvings, and above all with painted frescoes which are the glory of Indian art in their colouring, their beauty of line and flowing draperies, and their wonderful vitality.

The great group of rock-cut temples at Ellora are some of them Buddhist, some Jain, and some Hindu. The most famous is the Kailasa temple, which has been described as the noblest Hindu monument of ancient India. The whole temple, more than 160 feet long and 100 feet broad, is chiselled out of the rocky summit of a hill. Walls and roof alike are of solid rock, elaborately carved both inside and out, while in the courtyard stand pillars, elephants, figures of gods and goddesses, sculptured from blocks left standing for this purpose when the rest of the rock was hewn away.

In the south the earliest existing examples of architecture and sculpture date from the close of the sixth century A.D. They include the remarkable 'Seven Pagodas' in the Madras Presidency, each of them a temple carved out of a single great rock-boulder standing on the sea shore. Of a later date are the imposing temples of Southern India with their elaborate sculptured decoration. This Dravidian architecture is very different in style from that of the north, where the old temples are comparatively small, in shape generally somewhat like a steeple with curving sides built over a central shrine. The southern temples are on a much larger scale with great towers, sculptured with a wealth of ornament. They are often set in spacious courtyards entered through lofty gateways (*gopurams*) which may dwarf the temple itself.

Mohammedan architecture is again of quite another character, distinguished by its grandeur and symmetry of design, and by its decorations of beautiful tracery. The Moslems introduced the use of the dome, the arch, and the minaret, and combined them with Hindu features and Hindu craftsmanship, producing an outstanding contribution to Indian art.

In contrast to a Hindu temple a Mohammedan mosque has no shrine and no sculptured figures; it is an open court surrounded by arcades, of which one side forms the sanctuary. The ruins of

the oldest mosque in India with its screen of noble arches may still be seen a few miles from the present city of Delhi. It was built after the capture of Delhi in 1193 by the first Mohammedan conquerors. Close to it stands the remarkable Kutb Minar, generally regarded as a tower of victory, over 230 feet high, with a spiral staircase inside. It is of red sandstone, ornamented with bands of verses from the Koran, and looks as fresh in colour and as sharp in outline as if it had just been built.

All over North India and the Deccan, mosques, palaces, and tombs mark the Mohammedan era. The buildings of the earlier dynasties are followed by those of the Mogul period, including the magnificent palace-forts at Agra and Delhi and the world-famous Taj Mahal at Agra, in which exquisite workmanship is enhanced by the use of marble, and inlays of precious stones.

There is no space here to describe the delicate Rajput and Mogul paintings, miniatures, and illuminated books, or the beautiful traditional arts and crafts of India. These include fine examples of the jeweller's art, of metal and enamel work, and of carving, besides the production of brocades, shawls, chintzes, and muslins, which became celebrated all over the world.

In the complex pattern of Indian life, as we see it to-day, ancient and modern are strangely mingled. Hindu culture, Moslem culture, and Western culture all meet—yet each retains its distinctive character. For many years there was a tendency in the study of western education and modes of thought to neglect the old literatures and philosophies. But there is to-day a great revival of interest in all forms of national art and culture. New life is stirring everywhere. Young India, both Hindu and Moslem, is turning for inspiration in an increasing measure to its own great heritage from the past.

### CHAPTER III

## HISTORIC INDIA

No other country in the world, except China, can boast a civilisation as ancient and continuous as that of India. Archaeologists excavating in Sind have discovered that as far back as three or four thousand years B.C. there was an advanced civilisation in the Indus valley; they have revealed at Mohenjo-daro the traces of well-built houses with stairways and bathrooms, and have dug up metal implements and pottery, gold and silver ornaments, and beautifully engraved seals.

This was long before the time of the Aryan invasions over the passes of the north-west, which are supposed to have taken place between 2000 and 900 B.C. It is thought that the Aryans first established settlements in the area between the Indus and the Jumna, and by degrees extended their territory over the whole of Northern India, imposing themselves on the earlier civilisation there. Before the dawn of exact history all that is known of the social, religious, and political life of ancient India is gathered from the early literature in the Sanskrit, Pali, and Tamil languages, and in particular from the two great Hindu epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.

It is not until the seventh century B.C. that any precise and detailed knowledge becomes available from inscriptions, coins, works of art, and historical writings, and from the accounts of Greek and Chinese travellers. Only one outstanding name can be mentioned here. We know that about 563 B.C. there was born in North India one of the greatest figures in world history, Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism. There are countless legends of his life, and how he received enlightenment as he meditated under a tree near Patna, and preached his first sermon at Sarnath, near Benares. Many scenes from his life-story are depicted in stone on the magnificent gateways of the famous Buddhist monument at

Sanchi, between Bombay and Delhi, over two thousand years old, and in the sculptures and paintings at Ajanta.

To give here any connected account of India's chequered history is not possible. The number of principalities and powers has been almost past counting. The northern plains, the Deccan plateau, and the far south have each their separate stories. Hundreds of dynasties have flourished and decayed. The tale is one of ceaseless internal wars between different kingdoms, of ceaseless invasions from the outside. From the time of the Aryans down to the eighteenth century successive hordes of invaders came at intervals over the passes—Greeks, Scythians and Turks, Huns, Afghans, and Mongols. Although from time to time great empires arose, it was not until the days of British rule that the whole of India came under one suzerainty.

The first invasion of which the date is definitely recorded is that of Alexander the Great in 326 B.C. He crossed the river Hydaspes (Jhelum), and defeated the army of the giant king Porus. A coin commemorating his victory may be seen in the British Museum. King Porus, when asked by Alexander how he should be treated, replied proudly 'As a king', and his request was granted.

The invasion of Alexander had little influence on India, but the later formation of Greek kingdoms in Western Asia brought contact between India and Europe, and from the descriptions of Greek officers we get most interesting details of Indian life. It is from one of these officers, Megasthenes, that we know much about the highly organised government of the first great empire in India, the empire of the Maurya dynasty, which extended over the whole of the north as well as Afghanistan.

The most famous of the Mauryan kings was Asoka, one of the two greatest monarchs of Indian history, the other being the Mogul emperor, Akbar, contemporary of Queen Elizabeth. Asoka reigned from 273 to 232 B.C. and his empire extended over the whole of India except the Tamil States in the far south. But Asoka made only one conquest by force of arms. After that he renounced violence, and became an ardent convert to Buddhism.



10. Calcutta, 1797.



11. Modern Calcutta.





It was through his missionaries that Buddhism spread over India into Ceylon and beyond, and became one of the great world religions. Asoka has left an intimate picture of his character and government in the inscriptions and edicts which he caused to be engraved on rocks and specially erected pillars in different parts of his empire, still existing to-day. 'Wherein consists the Law of Duty?', we read on one of them, 'In these things—little impiety, many good deeds, compassion, liberality, truthfulness and purity.'

We must pass over several centuries of fresh invasions and lesser dynasties to the days of the great Gupta empire, in the fourth century A.D., often known as the Golden Age of Hindu art and literature. The Sanskrit language was revived and there was a great renaissance of learning. We read of a group of writers at the court of the Gupta kings known as the 'Nine Gems', of whom the most brilliant was the poet Kalidasa. Medical science was widely studied; there were mathematicians and astronomers who show an intimate acquaintance with the work of the Greeks, and artists, sculptors, and craftsmen of the first rank, some of whose work may still be seen in the paintings at Ajanta and the figures and reliefs at Sarnath. The journal of a Chinese pilgrim Fa-hien, which has come down to us, describes the country as rich and prosperous, with rest-houses for travellers and a free hospital in Pataliputra, the capital, now called Patna.

The Gupta empire was in its turn swept away by Huns from Central Asia, and for several hundred years no great power asserted its dominion. We hear of a notable Buddhist king, Harsha, in the seventh century, whose kingdom was described in detail by another Chinese pilgrim, but Buddhism in India was already in its decline. At the same time, a great religious change came over the peoples of Western and Central Asia, following the teaching of the prophet Mohammed, who preached a new religion of monotheism and conquest. The armies of Islam swept victoriously both to the east and to the west. The new religion was destined profoundly to affect the future of India, and in 1001 A.D. the first Mohammedan invader, Mahmud of Ghazni, a Turk, set foot on Indian soil.

It was not, however, till towards the end of the twelfth century that Moslem invaders under Muhammad of Ghor, an Afghan, descended through the Punjab towards the Indian plains. Here they were met by the gallant Rajputs, the warrior clans of Northern India who were always the foremost defenders against the invader. But, in spite of their bravery, the Hindus, with their cumbrous, slow-moving armies depending largely on elephants, were no match for the dashing cavalry of Muhammad of Ghor. They were driven back to their fastnesses in Rajputana and Central India, where some of their descendants have maintained themselves until the present day. In a few years Kutb-ud-din, Muhammad of Ghor's general, had subdued most of India north of the Vindhya Mountains, had conquered Delhi (in 1193), and had become the founder of the first Mohammedan dynasty in India. It was followed by others for over five hundred years.

The early Sultans, as they were called, were nearly all cruel and fanatical. The images used in Hindu worship inflamed them to fury. Not only did they systematically destroy Hindu temples, but they slaughtered thousands of their Hindu subjects, and practised barbarous cruelties even on their own families.

The tale of the first sack of Chitor, the Rajput capital, in 1303, is one of the most picturesque told by the Rajput bards. The Sultan Alauddin as a young man had claimed the beautiful Princess Padmani, captured her husband, and held him as ransom for his wife. The Princess duly set forth with a procession of litters for the Sultan's camp, but when they arrived there sprang from each litter an armed warrior and they rescued the Rajput Prince. Later, the Sultan in revenge marched to the ruthless destruction of Chitor. The Prince and most of his comrades were killed, and Padmani, followed by all the Rajput women, led the way to an underground cave where they lit their funeral pyres and gave themselves up to the flames.

The grim fortress citadel of Tughlakabad, a few miles from New Delhi, still stands as a memorial of Muhammad Tughlak, the ablest but most cruelly tyrannical of these early sultans, whose

empire of twenty-four provinces extended far into South India. Thousands of Hindus, especially in the north, accepted the conquerors' creed. Only south of the river Cauvery did the Dravidian kingdoms escape invasion. Here there was a succession of Hindu dynasties from ancient times, fighting their own internal wars. Even before Tughlak's death in 1351 much of his empire was lost through rebellion; one of his officers founded an independent Moslem dynasty in the Deccan (the Bahmani dynasty); another established himself in Bengal. In the south rose a strong Hindu kingdom, Vijayanagar, which dominated Southern India for nearly two centuries.

Before long Tughlak's successors found themselves in their turn threatened with invasion from the north, this time by the dreaded Mongols. In 1398 the famous Timur the Tartar, also known as Tamerlane, raided the Punjab and sacked Delhi.

Over one hundred years later, in 1526, Babur, direct descendant of Timur and one of the most romantic figures in history, successfully invaded India and laid the foundations of the Mogul empire. Babur was the first of the Great Moguls, six rulers in direct line who made their empire famous all over the world. Babur, great soldier, poet, painter, died when he was only forty-seven, and his successor, Humayun, was for a time driven from his throne.

It was Humayun's son, Akbar, who became the greatest of Indian monarchs. He reigned for nearly fifty years, from 1556 to 1605, almost exactly at the same time as Queen Elizabeth, and extended his empire over nearly the whole of India. He gave to it the best administration the country had known for a thousand years. He tried to secure equal justice for all the peoples under his rule. He abolished oppressive taxes, and reformed the system of land revenue on a basis which is still in use to-day. Above all, he treated Hindus and Mohammedans equally, and sought to reconcile their religious differences; indeed, he tried to found a universal faith which all would accept. His eldest son, Jahangir, who succeeded him, was the son of a Rajput princess. A vivid picture

of Jahangir's court and its magnificence was given by Sir Thomas Roe, appointed ambassador by James I.

England had already made her first contacts with India through the sea route discovered by the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama in 1498. In the reign of Akbar, three English travellers arrived in Delhi bearing letters from Queen Elizabeth, and in 1600 a group of British merchants founded the East India Company, the most famous Company in history. Elizabeth gave them a charter conferring on them the monopoly of trade with the East. With the permission of Jahangir's governor the Company set up its first trading-post or 'factory' at Surat, and gradually other factories were started along the coasts. The Portuguese and the Dutch were already in the field; the French soon followed. Madras, originally called Fort St George, was one of the earliest British settlements, and Bombay was obtained as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II, who let it to the East India Company for ten pounds a year. Calcutta was not founded until 1690, by the adventurous Job Charnock, who married a Hindu lady after rescuing her from her first husband's funeral pyre.<sup>1</sup>

Jahangir died in 1627 and was succeeded by his son, Shah Jahan, Akbar's favourite grandson. Many a fascinating glimpse of life in Mogul times is given by Mogul paintings with their delicate detail and beautiful colouring.<sup>2</sup> The Mogul emperors were great builders and great patrons of the arts; the splendid fort at Agra and the deserted red sandstone city of Fatehpur Sikri were built by Akbar, but greatest builder of them all was Shah Jahan. The fort and palace at Delhi, the great mosque known as the Jama Masjid outside its walls, and, last but not least, the Taj Mahal at Agra, the wonderful memorial to his wife, remain as a record of his reign—a group of buildings unique in beauty and magnificence.

At Shah Jahan's court, which was a scene of unparalleled

<sup>1</sup> See p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> A very fine collection of these paintings is to be seen in the Indian section of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

splendour, poetry and painting flourished, but his closing years were in pathetic contrast to the brilliance of his prime. For a long time he was confined in the palace at Agra through the intrigues of his third son, Aurangzeb, who eventually succeeded him. Aurangzeb was the last of the Great Moguls. He won his throne through crime, and spent his long reign in continual wars. He antagonised his Hindu subjects by destroying thousands of Hindu temples, and imposing a special tax on all Hindus. He was a fanatical Mohammedan, and the seeds of hatred which he sowed still bear fruit to-day. Even before he died in 1707 his great empire was tottering to its fall.

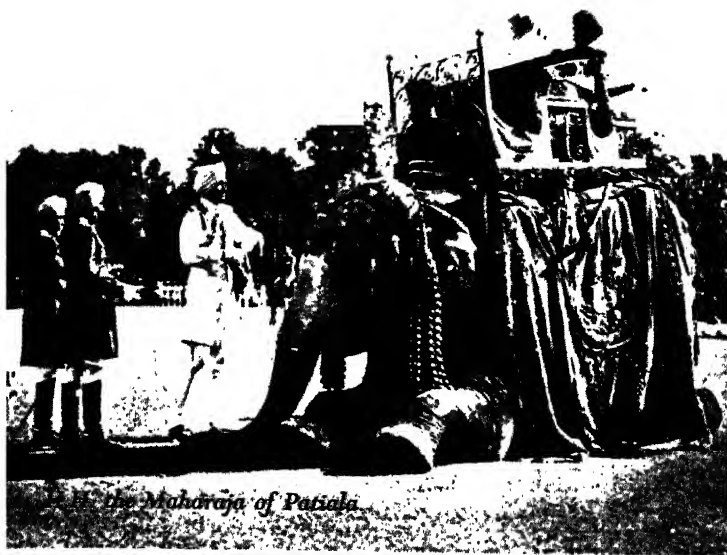
The hardy Marathas from the hilly country of Western India had long been in open rebellion under their bold and cunning leader, Sivaji. After his and Aurangzeb's death the Maratha chiefs extended their dominion over a wide area and engaged in struggles with the Rajputs, who had reasserted their old independence. In the north the Sikhs of the Punjab set up a kingdom of their own, while in the south the Mohammedan governor of the Deccan established the dynasty of the Nizams of Hyderabad. In 1739 Nadir Shah of Persia, last of the invaders, raided Delhi and carried off the famous Peacock throne. Soon the successors of Aurangzeb who ruled in Delhi found that they were emperors only in name.

At this time the British had no possessions in India except the land on which stood the factories of the East India Company. They had come to India solely for purposes of trade and had no desire for conquest. 'Do not waste money on military adventures' had been the advice of Sir Thomas Roe. But Britain and France were at war in Europe, and the French from their settlement at Pondicherry attacked the Company's settlement at Madras. The trading companies of the two countries drifted into war. Both sides sought Indian allies. Thus the East India Company embarked on an adventure which, in another hundred years, and largely through the help of Indian soldiers (sepoys as they were called) led to the establishment of British control over the whole peninsula.

If it had not been for the military genius of a young Englishman, Robert Clive, there might well have been a French Indian empire instead of a British one. Clive was a junior clerk in the service of the East India Company in Madras when it was captured by the French under Dupleix, an able and ambitious leader, who dreamed of a French empire and hoped to drive the British out of India.

Clive soon showed his brilliant gifts as a soldier and foiled the plans of Dupleix by seizing Arcot in 1751. A few years later, owing to lack of support from home and to British supremacy at sea, the French power in India was virtually brought to an end by the battle of Wandewash (1760). But before this Clive had been sent to Bengal where the Nawab, Suraj-ud-Daula, had seized the British settlement at Calcutta. The story of the 'Black Hole', where a large number of British prisoners were confined in one small room, is too well known to need repetition here. Clive gained a crushing victory over Suraj-ud-Daula at the battle of Plassey in 1757, and installed the Nawab's uncle, Mir Jaffir, in his stead. In return Mir Jaffir, besides enriching Clive personally, gave to the East India Company the *Diwani* (the control of the administration and revenue) of a large tract of country, and thus the Company became in fact the rulers of Bengal.

The battle of Plassey therefore marks a turning-point in the history of both Britain and India. Through it the British acquired for the first time a position comparable to that of the Indian rulers who had arisen after the collapse of the Mogul power. But this was a period when ambitious rival armies and plundering robber bands were sweeping over the countryside, when famine and disease were rife, trade had dwindled, and there was no security either for persons or property. It led on almost inevitably to a further extension of British rule in order to restore the peace and order on which trade depends. But at the time that extension of control was neither desired nor planned by the directors of the East India Company at home.



14. *Stacking cotton.*





## CHAPTER IV

### THE BUILDING OF MODERN INDIA

As a result of the battle of Plassey the East India Company suddenly changed from a trading company to one with political and administrative responsibilities. The Company's servants were ill-suited for such work, and there followed a black period of misrule in which they used their power to enrich themselves and to push their own private interests. After a few years Clive was sent back to India to stop this flagrant mismanagement, and he reported that he was shocked by the 'scene of anarchy, confusion, bribery, corruption and extortion'. He took severe measures and in doing so naturally made many enemies. But public opinion in England was roused, and Parliament appointed a committee to inquire into the facts. Clive's own conduct, in having himself accepted over a quarter of a million pounds from Mir Jaffir, whom he had put on the throne of Bengal, was called in question. He protested vigorously that such action was no more than the usual Indian custom, and his defence was finally accepted, but the affair so preyed on his mind that it is generally held to have hastened his tragic death by his own hand at the age of forty-nine.

The most able of Clive's subordinates was Warren Hastings, and with his appointment in 1773 as Governor-General of all the Company's territories the period of irresponsible misrule was brought to an end. Warren Hastings devoted himself to building up a system of government which should be just and fair to all, founded on India's own laws and customs, and not forgetting the welfare of the peasants, whose interests were very near his heart. He stopped private trading by the Company's servants, and took steps to prevent corruption and extortion. He encouraged the study of Indian languages, and employed Indian scholars and translators with the object of establishing a legal system which should be based on the recognition of both Hindu and Moham-

medan law. He laid the foundation of just and ordered government and accepted no 'presents' for himself. Nevertheless criticism of some of his actions, together with personal spite and jealousy, resulted in his being impeached before the House of Commons on his return to England. His trial dragged on for no less than seven years. In the end he was acquitted and to-day he is universally recognised as one of the greatest builders of modern India.

The period of exploitation was passing into the period of trusteeship. The great 'humanitarian' movement, as it was called, was gathering strength in England, and British conscience was being awakened to the rights of man all over the world, regardless of colour or creed. The first campaign of the humanitarians was against slavery; the next resulted in the taking over by Parliament of the supervision of the East India Company's administration in all but commercial affairs. 'All political power which is set over men', said Burke, 'ought to be exercised ultimately for their benefit. Its use is in the strictest sense a trust.' By the Act of 1784, introduced by the younger Pitt, that trust in India was in future to be exercised through a Board of Control, whose president became something like a Secretary of State.

Lord Cornwallis was made the first Governor-General under the new order and continued the work of purifying the Company's administration. No longer do we hear tales of English 'Nabobs', comparatively young men returning from service in the East India Company with large fortunes. In the new spirit of trusteeship the new generation of officials were told that their task was not to trade, but to be the agents of good government for the prosperity and happiness of the people.

In 1813 Parliament decided that the Company was no longer to have the monopoly of trade with India, and twenty years later, in 1833, a new Act required it to close its commercial business 'with all convenient speed'. Private British subjects were then allowed for the first time to settle in India if they wished. The Company was no longer a Company in anything but name, but

it continued with the task of administration until its final winding up in 1858 after the Mutiny.

At the time of Pitt's Act of 1784 the British were established as the strongest political power in India, but their widely separated possessions were only in communication by sea. Warren Hastings had consolidated the Company's territories in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay; but they were threatened by Hyder Ali, a daring Mohammedan adventurer who had established himself in Mysore, by the Maratha Confederacy whose dominions extended nearly to Bengal, and by Hyderabad, the chief centre of French intrigue. Parliament and the directors of the Company at home still looked with disfavour on any scheme of further expansion. Yet through the action of two high-handed Governors-General, the Marquis Wellesley and Lord Hastings, British rule was extended by 1820 over almost the whole of India.

The Marquis Wellesley, who became Governor-General in 1798, was firmly convinced that, as he put it, no greater blessing could be conferred on the inhabitants of India than the extension of British authority. He was further convinced that the only way to secure peaceful conditions for trade would be either to bring under British control those Indian States which bordered on the Company's territory, or to enter into alliances with them. In the south, Hyder Ali, who had seized the kingdom of Mysore, was plundering the whole countryside and marched up to the very walls of Madras. Wellesley took the offensive against him, but his son, Tippoo Sultan, continued to disturb the peace, and made an alliance with the French, with whom Britain was again at war. Tippoo was finally defeated at Seringapatam in 1799, and a member of the former Hindu ruling family of Mysore was placed by Wellesley on the throne. With the Nizam of Hyderabad, the greatest ruler in the Deccan, Wellesley entered into a direct alliance, guaranteeing him the protection of the Company's forces on condition that he should disband his troops, whom he had placed under the command of French generals.

Then, under Lord Hastings, continued the long drawn-out

struggle with the various Maratha chiefs, whose power now extended right across Central India, and bands of whose followers used to raid the country far and wide, plundering for booty and bringing murder and arson in their train. The battle of Assaye, won in 1803 by Arthur Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellington) during the period of office of his brother, was only the first battle in a bitter struggle which went on for fifteen years. The Rajput States, which looked to Britain for help, were at the mercy of the depredations and exactions of the marauders. Eventually a final settlement was made. Some of the Maratha territories were taken over by the British; others remained under the control of their chieftains. Thus arose the present States of Gwalior, Indore, and Baroda.

For the first time since the decay of the Mogul power, peace now reigned over the greater part of India, and the Company's officials could devote themselves to establishing order and good government. There does not seem any question but that the masses of the people welcomed the change. In all the endless warfare of states and principalities the peasants took little part. For them what mattered was not who was the governing power, but whether life and property were safe, and what were the demands of the tax-gatherer. With the restoration of internal peace agriculture and trade gradually recovered, and the builders of the administration in India followed a wise policy. When Indian law was codified (under the Act of 1833) it was laid down that due regard should be paid to the rights, feelings, and usages of the people. This liberal outlook was not limited to law; it extended also to other sides of administration, such as land revenue and tenure, which touched the masses of the people very nearly. In this way the cardinal principle of British freedom, respect for the individual, was extended beyond the individual to the community. Thus a foundation was laid for the growth of liberty and self-governing institutions.

From the time of Hastings it was a part of British policy to treat all creeds equally and not to attempt to interfere with re-

ligious and social customs. The British have sometimes been blamed for their reluctance to depart from strict neutrality even where reforms in social customs were obviously desirable. But there were some notable exceptions. In 1829 Lord William Bentinck, then Governor-General, with the support of a great Indian reformer, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, decided to make the practice of *suttee* illegal. This was a practice by which high-caste Hindu widows sacrificed themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands. Though never a generally accepted custom, 839 *suttees* were reported in Bengal in the year 1818. *Suttee*-stones scattered over India still perpetuate the memory of a few of its unfortunate victims, as do the pathetic imprints of the little hands of fifteen Rajput princesses on one of the gateways of the fort of Jodhpur. In the Punjab and the Rajput States *suttee* was not finally abandoned until many years later.

It was Bentinck also who took the first steps in the legal suppression of the Thugs, a sect who were trained to strangle and then rob travellers on the road, professing to regard their victims as sacrifices to the goddess Kali. Infanticide of girl children, a common practice among certain castes, and slavery were gradually brought to an end. The India of the early nineteenth century was very different from the India of to-day.

For a long time the Company was hostile to missionaries and refused them all facilities to enter their territories. But the humanitarians, headed by William Wilberforce, leader of the movement for the abolition of slavery, pressed for their admittance. And from the time that William Carey, a Baptist minister, got himself smuggled ashore in a Danish ship in 1794, they have been one of the greatest influences in the spread of education in India.

In the chaotic conditions which followed the collapse of the Mogul power there had been a great decline in both Hindu and Moslem learning. Again owing to the efforts of the humanitarians, a grant for the encouragement of education was inserted in the Company's charter in 1813. There followed a long contro-

versy as to whether higher teaching should be given through the medium of English or the classical languages of India, Sanskrit for Hindus, Arabic and Persian for Mohammedans. A famous Minute of Lord Macaulay in 1835 finally decided in favour of what is known as 'English education'. This course was keenly advocated by progressive Indians, including Ram Mohan Roy, who with the help of an Englishman, David Hare, had already established the college in Calcutta now known as the Presidency College. Some years later, during the Viceroyalty of Lord Dalhousie, a complete scheme of education for India from the primary school to the university was drawn up in a Despatch by Sir Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control, and grandfather of the present Lord Halifax. This Despatch of 1854 has been called one of the most statesmanlike and democratic documents in the history of education. It has formed the foundation of nearly all further developments, and led to the immediate establishment of the first modern universities, in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay.

It was under the Governor-Generalship of Lord Dalhousie (1848-56) that British control was extended to cover the whole of British India as we know it to-day. But before this the Company had again been involved in wars in Afghanistan, in Sind, and in the Punjab. After the death of the great Sikh leader, Ranjit Singh, known as the 'Lion of the Punjab', with whom the Company had made a treaty of friendship and non-aggression, the powerful Sikh army determined to challenge British rule, and marched across the British frontier. Fierce fighting followed, which only ended a few years later in the annexation of the Punjab in 1849. So wisely and well was the work of settling the new province carried out by those two remarkable brothers, Henry and John Lawrence, that it remained loyal all through the Mutiny, less than ten years later.

Dalhousie's other territorial additions were made without further warfare. A man of great enterprise and enthusiasm, convinced that British rule was the best guarantee of progress, he

claimed that his government had the right of the paramount power to take over any state whose ruler died without leaving a direct heir. This was called the 'doctrine of lapse'. In other cases he made direct annexations, notably in the case of the kingdom of Oudh, where there had long been flagrant misrule and oppression.

It was Lord Dalhousie who, with dynamic energy, began the task of transforming India into a modern state. Already in the previous twenty years (between 1835 and 1855) imports and exports alike had trebled their value, though the character of British-Indian trade had changed as a sequel to the industrial revolution in England. Following on developments there not very many years earlier, Dalhousie planned a railway system for India, introduced the telegraph and cheap postage, built roads and bridges, improved the ports, and began large-scale irrigation with the construction of the Ganges canal. There was now internal free trade in the whole territory of British India, and Dalhousie, at the end of his term of office, wrote that he looked forward to 'a happy record of peace, prosperity and progress'.

Yet in 1857, little more than a year later, came the storm of the Mutiny. Undoubtedly, feelings of alarm and discontent were aroused by Dalhousie's annexations and by his sweeping changes, and suspicions that their religion was in danger were rife among the sepoys of the Bengal army, but the Mutiny was not in any sense a general rebellion. The masses of the people took no part in it. Many Indian regiments remained loyal, many Indians gave protection to British fugitives and took them into their homes, proving the truest of friends. The spark which set the Mutiny ablaze was the distribution of cartridges with ends said to be greased with fat from cows and pigs, and therefore unclean to both Hindus and Mohammedans. The mutineers seized Delhi and besieged Lucknow. The gallant stand of Lucknow's little garrison in the Residency, where Sir Henry Lawrence met his death, its ultimate relief by Campbell, and the massacre at Cawnpore are stories familiar in the history books.

announcing, through their spokesman at the first Round Table Conference in 1930, their willingness to consider entering a Federal Union, provided that their treaty rights were maintained. A scheme for Federation was therefore worked out in the new Constitution of 1935, in Part II of the Act, which was to be implemented as soon as the rulers of half the population of the States should agree to join. But when it came to the settlement of detailed terms negotiations proved long and difficult. Meanwhile the whole of the Federal part of the Act was opposed by the Congress party on the ground that the representatives of the States in the Federal Parliament would be what they called 'Palace nominees', and not the elected representatives of their peoples. In some States in 1938-39 a serious situation developed owing to Congress agitation. In these circumstances, not surprisingly, the Princes hung back and became more and more anxious about their position under the proposed Federation. Shortly after the outbreak of war the Viceroy announced that the Federal part of the Act would be suspended.

The Princes claim to be as patriotic Indians as any in the country. They declare that they are prepared to endorse the demands of British India for self-government, but in their turn they insist on security under the British Crown, with adequate guarantees for the maintenance of their treaty rights, and for the defence of India from external aggression.



## CHAPTER V

### THE INDIAN STATES

IN speaking of India most people commonly refer only to British India, the territory directly under British rule. But actually Indian India, the territory still governed in the present as in the past by Indian Princes, occupies almost half (seven-sixteenths) of the whole country. The two biggest of the Indian States, Hyderabad and Kashmir, are each almost as large as Great Britain, while the smallest occupy no more than a few square miles. More than half of the whole territory of the States belongs to the twenty-four largest and, although the total number is 562, over three hundred of these (327) are States only in name and their chieftains have very limited powers. It is proposed to merge many of these small units in larger neighbouring States, and steps in this direction were taken in April 1943 in respect of the very small States in Western India, but legal difficulties have to be overcome.

The origin of the States is bound up with the history of India. Some of them have been independent or semi-independent princedoms for at least a thousand years, others broke away from the decaying Mogul empire, others again were set up by alliance or arrangement with the British. All of them have separate treaties or recognised relations with the British Crown, which Queen Victoria pledged herself to uphold in her famous Proclamation of 1858, and which have been reaffirmed by the British Government on behalf of the Crown several times since. By these treaties the rulers of all the more important States have sovereign and autocratic powers within their own borders; but the Crown as the Paramount Power is responsible for their defence, and for all their external affairs both with foreign countries and with other States. Their subjects when travelling abroad are treated as 'British protected persons'. The Viceroy appoints Residents or Political Agents to the States, and deals with their relations with

Government through the Political Department of the Government of India.

The Princes are among the most devotedly loyal of His Majesty's subjects, and on the outbreak of war in 1939, as in 1914, immediately offered their personal services and placed their whole resources at the service of the King-Emperor. Many of them maintain their own troops, which together form the 'Indian States' Forces, but are not part of what is called the 'Indian Army'. Units of these Forces are serving in many parts of India and overseas, and since the war their strength has been greatly increased. At the same time a number of units have been raised by the States for the Indian Army.

The States have their own systems of administration, their own laws, their own courts, their own taxes. Maritime customs, and the railways and postal and telegraph services which pass through State territories, come under Central control, but some of the larger States have their own internal railways and postal services, and Hyderabad also has its own coinage. In all the larger States the ruler governs through a Diwan or Chief Minister, generally with an Executive Council, and some of these Diwans have been among the ablest of Indian administrators. Many of the Princes devote themselves whole-heartedly to the welfare of their subjects, though this is not true of all. In the case of gross mismanagement the Paramount Power interferes and appoints a new ruler.

The States have naturally not remained unaffected by the political developments in British India of the present century. Many of them have progressive administrations based on British Indian methods, and some are in certain respects in advance of British India, while others are still more or less mediaeval in their organisation. The most important, comprising between them nearly three-quarters of the State population, have now instituted Legislative Assemblies. Some of these have elected majorities, with the right of voting on budget grants. Further measures to curtail the use of autocratic power and to associate the States' peoples more closely with their governments are to be expected

in accordance with the spirit of the times. If all the States were to unite on such a policy, it would go far to ease future relations with self-governing British India.

It is often noted that there is very little communal trouble in the Indian States; but it is to be remembered that most of them have only a small Moslem population, and that such trouble is easier to deal with under autocratic than democratic rule. In Kashmir, for instance, the State with the largest Mohammedan population, the killing of cows is forbidden although Moslems form the great majority of the inhabitants.

To many people a mention of the Princes of India conjures up a vision of magnificent jewels, splendid hospitality, gorgeous elephant processions, and wonderful tiger-shoots. Certainly, it is in the States that the old picturesqueness of Indian life still survives with all its colour, with its time-honoured customs and ceremonial, and its ancient handicrafts. Widely as the States differ in character among themselves, there is in them an atmosphere distinct from that of British India. There is a strong personal link between the ruler and his people, and there are some who maintain that the subjects of the States are on the whole happier than their fellows in the British Provinces.

Most ancient and famous in Indian history are the States of Rajputana, which now number twenty-two, mainly in the semi-desert country west of the Gangetic plain. Their rulers are descendants of the brave and chivalrous warrior clans who resisted the first onslaught of the Moslem invaders in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Maharana of Udaipur, the premier Rajput State, claims to be descended from the sun itself, and his hill-girt capital with its marble palaces, built on the shore of a beautiful lake and reflected in its clear waters, is thought by many to be the loveliest place in India.

Typical of the Rajput tradition was that gallant soldier-statesman, the late Maharaja of Bikaner, who died in February 1943. He fought in the last war, and in this one protested that 'a Rajput is never too old to fight'. He represented India at many inter-

national conferences, and during his rule of more than forty years developed his State on progressive lines, spending much on irrigation. Bikaner is largely a desert country, where camels are in common use, and its army includes the famous Bikaner Camel Corps. In the north nearly 1000 square miles are now irrigated by a concrete-lined canal which comes all the way from the Sutlej river, 85 miles distant.

The largest state of Rajputana is Jodhpur, about the size of Ireland. It is famous for its magnificent fort, dominating the city, its marbles which helped to build the Taj Mahal, its polo, its pig-sticking, and its large aerodrome, the first in the Indian States to be used as a regular port of call by the British and Dutch air services. Another name for Jodhpur is Marwar, and *marwaris* are known all over India as among the most successful merchants and bankers, many of them doing business in Calcutta. But the richest town of all Rajputana is Jaipur, capital of the State of that name, a rose-coloured city much visited by tourists for its palaces, its elephants, its crowded bazaars gay with the bright dresses of the women and the many-hued *puggrees* of the men, and its beautiful handicrafts, especially enamel-work on gold and silver.

Rajput States extend right down to the coast in the Kathiawar peninsula, and here is Nawanagar, whose late ruler was the famous cricketer Ranjitsinhji. His successor, the present Jam Sahib, is Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes and came to England in 1942 for a few months as a member of the Imperial War Cabinet. It is interesting to note that Kathiawar is the only part of India where lions are still to be found.

Adjoining Rajputana are the Maratha States of Central India—Baroda, Gwalior, and Indore. They are the survivors of the kingdoms founded by Maratha military chieftains in the eighteenth century. Baroda, though not much larger than Wales, is one of the wealthiest and most progressive of Indian States. Its ruler bears the hereditary title of Gackwar, and the late Maharaja, Sayaji Rao III, in his long reign of some sixty years, together with his enlightened Maharani, were pioneers of social and edu-

cational reform. Education was made compulsory for boys, legally but not actually, as long ago as 1906. A third of the men are now literate, and also an eighth of the women—proportions considerably higher than in any Province of British India. Child-marriage has been restricted for a number of years, and the Hindu laws of inheritance have been amended to be more favourable to women. There are well-developed social services and many self-governing institutions.

Gwalior, the largest of the Maratha States, with a population of 4 millions, came into the possession of the present Scindia dynasty late in the eighteenth century. It is famous for its fort, one of the most ancient strongholds in India, containing within its battlemented walls some of the finest examples of Hindu palace architecture. Gwalior has of late years spent large sums on irrigation and on village improvement.

In Central India also is the Moslem State of Bhopal, remarkable for having had a succession of women rulers. The late Begum, who abdicated in 1926 in favour of her son, the present Nawab, was a woman of outstanding ability under whose guidance the State made great progress. For many years she appeared in public enveloped in a *burka* (the cloak of a purdah woman), but at an advanced age she determined to set an example to younger women and abandoned the custom.

But far the largest Moslem State—the richest and most important State in the whole of India—is Hyderabad in the centre of the Deccan peninsula, with a population of 16 millions. Its ruler, called the Nizam, is descended from the last Mohammedan governor under the Mogul empire, who made himself independent when the Mogul power decayed. Most of the population are Hindus. Of recent years, especially under the very able administration of the late Sir Akbar Hydari, great schemes of development have been undertaken. Hyderabad city is the fourth largest town in the whole of India, and most of it has been rebuilt according to modern ideas of town-planning. Its Osmania University is unique in India in that the teaching, both in arts and

science, is given, with the help of specially translated books, almost entirely in Urdu, the language understood by most Indian Moslems. Primary education, formerly very backward, has made a great advance during the last ten years, and industries, especially cotton mills and ginning factories, are being developed. Hyderabad possesses the most southerly of the Indian coal-fields and sends coal, and also cement, all over Southern India. The many artistic treasures to be found in the State, including the famous caves of Ajanta and Ellora, are admirably cared for by the Nizam's government.

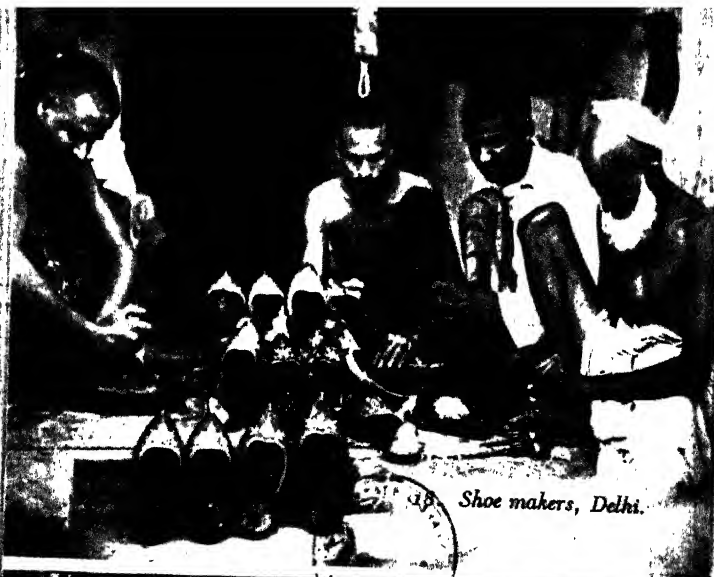
Still further south are the three important States of Mysore, Travancore, and Cochin. Mysore, often referred to as the model of a progressive State, is nearly as large as Scotland, and owes much to its late Maharaja, a devoutly orthodox Hindu, and his very able Mohammedan Diwan, Sir Mirza Ismail, now Diwan of Jaipur. For fifty years from 1831 Mysore was governed by British commissioners. While preserving ancient traditional ceremonial—and Mysore is annually at the Dasara festival the scene of a procession so splendid in its pageantry that it attracts visitors from all over India—Mysore has gone further than any other State in modern industrial development. Hydro-electric power, obtained from works on the Cauvery river, drives the machinery for the important gold-fields, illuminates the towns, and provides power for small industries. In connection with the works is a great system of canal irrigation. In the south and west of the State are magnificent forests where wild elephants are still caught in stockades (and it is from these parts that came Sabu, the Indian boy film-star). Education in Mysore is free and compulsory. It has a large modern university, a representative Assembly, and a Legislative Council.

Very progressive also are the States of Travancore and Cochin, in the extreme south of the peninsula, far the most literate region of the whole of India. In Travancore more than half the men, and a third of the women, are literate. It is the most densely populated of all the States, and of its 6 million inhabitants nearly a third



16. *Selling sugar.*





*Shoe makers, Delhi.*



*19. Silk mill workers.*



are Christians. Along the coastal tracts the people depend very largely on the coconut palm for their livelihood, producing from it copra, and manufacturing coir matting from the fibre. Travancore has a popular Assembly with a wide franchise for both men and women. Women have perhaps greater freedom than in any other part of India, and the system of inheritance is matriarchal, property going from a man to his sister's son. An important contribution to the removal of 'untouchability' was made by the present Maharaja when in 1936 he ordered all the temples of the State to be thrown open to the Depressed Classes.

It is a far cry from tropical Travancore to Kashmir in the heart of the Himalaya, as far as from London to Moscow. Kashmir is famous the world over for the beauty of its scenery, its flowers, and its handicrafts. Although one of the largest States in area, it is a mountain country sparsely populated except in the valleys, and its whole population is only a quarter of that of Hyderabad. The vast majority of the people are Mohammedan peasants, but the ruler is a Hindu and a Rajput. In recent years the State has been run on progressive lines, and education, though still very backward, is now advancing rapidly. If Kashmir, with its snow mountains, its lakes, and lovely gardens, were more accessible, it would undoubtedly be one of the great tourist centres of the world.

The Sikh States in the Punjab were established by military chiefs who made alliances with the British at the time of the war which ended in the annexation of the Punjab. The largest of them is Patiala, with an area of nearly 6000 square miles.

Up till 1921, when the Chamber of Princes was constituted, the rulers of the States had no kind of link with each other except their common allegiance to the Crown. The Chamber of Princes enables them to consult on matters of their common interests and their position in the Empire. The more important States—108 of them—have seats in their own right in the Chamber. A further 127 elect between them twelve representatives.

It was the Princes who first brought the idea of a Federation of the whole of India into the realm of practical politics by

announcing, through their spokesman at the first Round Table Conference in 1930, their willingness to consider entering a Federal Union, provided that their treaty rights were maintained. A scheme for Federation was therefore worked out in the new Constitution of 1935, in Part II of the Act, which was to be implemented as soon as the rulers of half the population of the States should agree to join. But when it came to the settlement of detailed terms negotiations proved long and difficult. Meanwhile the whole of the Federal part of the Act was opposed by the Congress party on the ground that the representatives of the States in the Federal Parliament would be what they called 'Palace nominees', and not the elected representatives of their peoples. In some States in 1938-39 a serious situation developed owing to Congress agitation. In these circumstances, not surprisingly, the Princes hung back and became more and more anxious about their position under the proposed Federation. Shortly after the outbreak of war the Viceroy announced that the Federal part of the Act would be suspended.

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## CHAPTER VI

### INDIA'S NATURAL WEALTH

INDIA is a land of peasants, and the main occupation of her people is agriculture. On it still depend three-quarters of all her millions for their living.

But of recent years industrial development has been making headway, and the substantial mineral resources of India are beginning to be utilised to supply the needs of modern industry. These resources, though varied, are not really very great in relation to the size of the country, in comparison, for example, to those of Europe without Russia, with which the area of India is so often compared. Of the three mineral products most important industrially, iron, coal, and petroleum, India has almost unlimited supplies of the first. In Bihar and Orissa is one of the richest iron-ore deposits in the world. The coal-fields are large, but they are concentrated mainly in one tract of Bengal and Bihar, which accounts for nine-tenths of the output; and the coal is for the most part not of very good quality, though India is the second coal-producing country of the British Commonwealth. About 200,000 persons are employed in the coal-mines. These have been long established and supply the railways and the iron and steel industry as their chief customers. Of petroleum India has little; some is found at the two extreme ends of the Indo-Gangetic plain, at Attock in the Punjab, and in Assam.

India possesses the world's chief supply of mica, which comes at present mostly from Bihar, though the deposits are widely distributed; women workers are specially skilled in splitting the mica blocks. India also produces about a third of the world's output of manganese. Gold is mined from the Kolar gold-fields in the State of Mysore. A number of other less well-known minerals, important in industry, are found in India. Among them are ilmenite, which contains titanium (much in demand for

paints), and monazite, both found in the beach sands round Cape Comorin. The production and export of these minerals has risen strikingly during the last ten years. No doubt there will be much further development of mineral resources, for example, the production of aluminium from the very large deposits of bauxite, but there is no reason to suppose that India is a country of vast unknown mineral wealth as is sometimes suggested.

Her forest wealth, though considerable, is not great for a country of India's size. It is largely concentrated on the outer hills of the Himalaya, and in the jungles of the Western Ghats. Here the most valuable timber tree is teak, and elephants are still largely used for lifting and dragging the logs.

The cultivated land of India is still to-day, as in the past, the chief support of the whole country. From the produce of the soil comes the livelihood of the masses of the people, and that is why the monsoon, which brings the rain, is of such vital importance. There are only three seasons in India, the 'cold weather', the 'hot weather' and the 'rains'. In spite of the great development of irrigation, the country as a whole still depends on crops grown with the natural rainfall. For several months the peasant has to work very hard, and then for a long stretch he is enforcedly idle, apart from anything he may do in the way of home industry. Should the rains fail, or come at the wrong times in the growing season, disastrous loss follows for millions. It was thought that the spectre of famine, so dread a scourge for centuries, had been finally banished by irrigation, by railway communications, and by the elaborate relief measures devised by Government in the course of many years' experience. But unfortunately, after forty years, 1943 saw the reappearance of famine in Bengal and some other parts of India. This has been described as a man-made famine. It was due to a variety of causes connected with the war<sup>1</sup> and not to any widespread failure of the crops on which peasants and town workers normally depend.

The average peasant in India cultivates a small holding with the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 89.

help of his wife and family and a pair of bullocks. In parts, mainly in the south, the cultivators or *ryots* are peasant proprietors, holding their land direct from Government. In other parts of the country, as in the United Provinces, the cultivators are the tenants of big landholders or *zemindars*, to whom they pay rent. All over India the holdings are often pathetically small, owing to division among a number of heirs. If, for instance, a man with four sons leaves four fields, each son will get a quarter of each field. Movements for the consolidation of holdings are making progress, especially in the Punjab and Central Provinces. But very often it is hardly possible for the peasant to eke out a bare subsistence from his land, and as a result of this and of other causes many thousands have had to join the ranks of landless labourers.

Land revenue has always been the mainstay of India's financial system. It is an Indian and not a British system, and was inherited from the Moguls and their predecessors; in a modified form it is still in use to-day. The Provinces still depend very largely on land revenue. Its payment is a condition of tenure, and it therefore partakes of the nature of rent, though it may also be regarded as tax. Under the *ryotwari* system the peasants pay the tax direct; under the *zemindari* system the landlords pay the tax from the rents of their tenants. The assessment of land revenue, based on a survey of the actual fields and crops grown, is revised very carefully at intervals by special officers, who make what is known as a 'settlement' for the next period of years. But in certain parts of India, notably Bengal and Bihar, there is what is known as a 'permanent settlement', which was made by Lord Cornwallis at the end of the eighteenth century. By this the amount of revenue payable was permanently fixed and cannot be legally altered. The result has proved unsatisfactory in many ways.

By the middle of the nineteenth century competition for land had become acute, and, in all parts where *zemindari* settlements were made, it was found necessary to pass legislation dealing with extortionate rents and the eviction of tenants, in order to give the

peasant some protection against exploiting landlords. Many of the big landholders have unfortunately been very neglectful of the interests of their tenants and of the development of their land, and in some parts, especially in the United Provinces and Bihar, there is still much agrarian discontent.

In a year of bad harvest the peasant is obliged to borrow from the local moneylender in order to tide over till next season; and though very frugal, he spends lavishly on occasions such as weddings. As a result the Indian cultivator is nearly always loaded with debt, and what is known as agricultural indebtedness is one of the greatest economic problems of India. Considerable remissions of land revenue are made in bad seasons, and various measures of relief have been passed by the different provincial governments of recent years to improve the position, especially since the introduction of the new constitution of 1935.

The crops grown in India naturally vary with the climate and the soil. They supply the people with food, and more than 90 per cent of India's exports are of agricultural origin. Except in respect of rice (of which over  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million tons used to be imported annually from Burma) India provides almost all her own food supply. The main food crops are rice, millets, wheat in the more temperate regions, and varieties of peas and lentils (pulses). The staple food is wheat and barley in the north; in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay it is rice, but in many parts of rural India the poorer classes live chiefly on different kinds of millet, which grow very easily with the natural rainfall.

About a third of the whole area of the country under cultivation is planted with rice of different types, and it is nearly all used for home consumption. Wheat, on the other hand, is exported in considerable quantity when harvests and prices are good.

Sugar cultivation has been revolutionised since 1929. At that time India was still importing nearly a million tons a year from the East Indies. Now India is the largest producer of cane-sugar in the world. As a result of the wonderful work done at the sugar-cane breeding station at Coimbatore, improved new varieties give

double the yield of the common kinds which used to be grown, and sugar cultivation has spread amazingly throughout Bihar and the United Provinces.

India is second only to pre-war China in the production of tea. The plantations on the damp slopes of the hills of Assam, round Darjeeling, and in Southern India provide the most valuable export after cotton and jute, and give employment, in garden and factory, to over a million workers.

We come now to other commercial or so-called money crops. Cotton and jute form the basis of India's two chief manufacturing industries, and they are at the same time her two main exports, both in the raw and manufactured state.

Practically all the jute in the world comes from Bengal and the adjacent Provinces. It is a tall annual plant with very tough fibres, peculiarly suited for making into sacks and sacking, but it only flourishes in rich alluvial soil such as is found in the region of the Ganges delta, where it has been grown for centuries. Cotton, on the other hand, is planted from the Punjab right down to the south of Madras, though the main crop comes from Bombay and the Central Provinces. India now produces more cotton than any other country except the United States, but much of it is still of the less valuable short staple varieties.

India is also the world's second largest supplier of oil-seeds of various kinds. They are grown all over the country, and are used both for domestic purposes in cooking and lighting, and for industry. In response to a growing demand there has been a striking extension of the area under their cultivation. Large quantities, amounting to over a million tons a year, chiefly ground-nuts and linseed, were exported before the war, for addition to olive-oil and for making margarine.

The growth of the Indian tobacco industry in recent years has also been remarkable. Tobacco cultivation, especially for cigarettes, has been so greatly extended and improved that India is now one of the world's largest producers, though most of the crop is consumed within her own borders.

It is forty years since the Government of India founded the first Agricultural Research Institute<sup>1</sup> for the improvement of Indian agriculture, and the good work has been continued on an increasing scale, at first almost entirely by British but now very largely by Indian scientists trained in western methods. Of each important crop, wheat, cotton, jute, sugar-cane, tobacco, and, to a less extent, rice (owing to technical difficulties), a number of greatly improved varieties have been produced suited to different types of soil. Each Province has an Agricultural Department to encourage 'better farming' with demonstrations of improved methods of cultivation, manuring, eradication of pests, etc., as well as to distribute improved strains of seed. By these means the yield of millions of acres has been very greatly increased. Workers trained in propaganda methods tour the countryside with samples of implements and packets of seed. Progress would have been more rapid if the cultivators were not illiterate, and could be reached by the printed word. But the peasant knows a good thing when he sees it with his own eyes, and the most effective means of teaching him has been found to be by a demonstration on his own land. Some 100,000 of these demonstrations are now carried out each year, and in spite of difficulties, the area under improved crops in British India is known to exceed 23 million acres. This means an additional income to Indian agriculture of some 20 million pounds. Real progress has thus been made.

The conservatism and illiteracy of the peasant are also a great handicap to the spread of co-operative methods. Efforts have been made by Government for a number of years to popularise co-operative banks, which would save the peasant from the moneylender, but they have not met with great success. Yet it is on co-operative methods, co-operative farming and marketing, consolidation of holdings, and schemes of rural reconstruction in general, which both Government and unofficial agencies are trying to promote, that the future of agriculture in India must largely

<sup>1</sup> At Pusa in 1904 with the help of an initial gift from Mr Henry Phipps of Chicago. The Institute has now been moved to New Delhi.



depend. Even with the most intensive cultivation of the land it will be difficult to provide sufficient food to support her vast and rapidly increasing population.

Government has also of recent years taken up very seriously the difficult problem of the improvement of the breeds of Indian cattle, and is trying to stimulate interest in better methods of animal-feeding and dairy-farming. A quarter of a century's patient work is now showing some results. Cattle are of very special importance in a country where, as in India, the bullock is the chief work animal. But their improvement presents very great difficulties owing to the Hindu veneration for the cow, which prevents animals from being killed off when they become diseased or useless. As a result the cattle population of India is far larger than the country can support—more than a third of all the cattle in the world—so that there are hundreds of thousands of animals eating valuable fodder and giving very little or no return. In addition there are millions of sheep and goats.

India has a few splendid indigenous breeds, among the finest in the world, like the Hissar and Ongole cattle, but on the whole both milch cows and draught animals are of a very low standard, and any one who has been to India will remember seeing miserable-looking animals with their bones showing through the skin or with grievous sores on their bodies. There are active veterinary departments for the prevention and cure of cattle diseases, which are rampant, but their activities can touch only a small proportion of the huge cattle population. That population provides a very important item of India's export trade in the shape of hides and skins, of which India has become the world's chief supplier. Tanning is a widespread industry carried on by *chamars*, a depressed class of Hindus, as well as in modern factories; and this war, like the last, has given a great impetus to the expansion of the leather and shoemaking industries.

An Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, set up in 1929, co-ordinates all the research going on throughout the country concerning crops, soils, plant and animal diseases, animal breeding

and nutrition, nulk and milk products, fruit canning, marketing etc., and it has issued many valuable publications. In 1939 it was aiding nearly one hundred research projects in both Provinces and States.

But probably the greatest contribution which the British Raj has made to the prosperity of Indian agriculture is through the irrigation of vast areas. Irrigation was not introduced by the British. Tanks and wells and even canals were constructed in India long centuries ago. The Hindu kings of Vijayanagar built elaborate works for irrigation and water supply, but modern irrigation has been developed in India on a larger scale than in any other part of the world.

The first large schemes were undertaken after the terrible famine of 1865-6, when over a million people died in Orissa alone. Their object was the protection of areas particularly liable to failure of the monsoon, but so successful did they prove that fresh schemes were planned to bring under cultivation land which was too dry to grow crops without artificial watering. By this means the Punjab was transformed from one of the poorest into one of the richest Provinces in India. These wonderful results led to larger and larger projects being undertaken. By constructing barrages across the great rivers and drawing off water into a network of canals, dry tracts which had been almost uninhabited desert in the Punjab and Sind have been turned into fertile fields supporting large and prosperous populations. The Lloyd Barrage at Sukkur in Sind, across the Indus, alone provides irrigation for  $5\frac{1}{2}$  million acres. It has sixty-six spans, each of which can be closed by steel gates, and is the largest work of its kind in the world. The Sutlej Valley Scheme has four separate barrages supplying ten canals which command an area far larger than the whole cultivated area of Egypt.

The waters of nearly all the great rivers of the north have now been harnessed to canal schemes, while in Central and Southern India great artificial lakes have been formed by the construction of massive dams in suitable positions across water-courses flowing

between hills. The Mettur Dam on the Cauvery river in Madras is nearly a mile long and over 200 feet high, and the reservoir formed by it covers an area of nearly 60 square miles. Then there are thousands of village 'tanks', reservoirs which may irrigate only a few acres. Altogether over 50 million acres of land are under irrigation, about 20 million acres from 'tanks' and wells, and 30 million acres from canals. The cost of the more elaborate schemes has amounted to over 100 million pounds, but the value of the crops raised is estimated at about 70 million pounds *each year*.

These large-scale irrigation projects are a triumph of engineering skill. Either in conjunction with them, or independently, a number of hydro-electric schemes have been developed which provide power for pumping from tube wells, for electric lighting, and for industry. Access to cheap electric power is expected to prove a major factor in India's industrial expansion. Indeed it has been suggested that her economic welfare in the future will largely depend on the proper use of her great water-power. Its wise distribution would make possible the dispersion of industrial centres and an immense development of small-scale village industry, bringing with it the prospect of a rise in the standard of living for great masses of the people.

## CHAPTER VII

### INDIA'S INDUSTRIES

It is only during the present century that India has become important industrial country, and still only a small proportion her people are engaged in modern machine industry. India's handicraft industries are centuries old, and her lovely fabrics were much sought after in Europe from the days when the first merchant-adventurers returned from the East. But the industrial revolution in England dealt a heavy blow to hand-spinning and weaving. Indian artisans could not compete with the cheap machine-made cotton goods from Lancashire which gradually supplanted the hand-made cloth that up till then had supplied the needs of the people. On the other hand, the invention of machinery brought with it an immense demand for India's raw material and agricultural products, and a vast increase in her external trade, especially after the introduction of cheap steamship transport, and again after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.

The foundation for a rapid development of trade and industry had been laid by the opening up of communications and the construction of railways. Planned by Lord Dalhousie with the primary object of giving protection against famine, the first Indian railway was opened in 1853. To-day India has over 41,000 miles of railroad linking up towns and industrial centres with each other and with the great ports. This is a mileage only exceeded by that of the United States, Russia, and Germany.

Rapid transport by road and rail has helped the marketing of commercial crops; still more important, it has brought contact between India's various peoples, and promoted that unity which is one of the greatest achievements of British rule. Of recent years thousands of villages which are miles from the nearest railway have been brought within reach of towns by the country motor-bus, instead of having to rely solely on the time-honoured bullock





cart, which jogs along at two miles an hour. The opening up of communications has already done much to break down the traditional isolation of the village. It is possible that after the war there may be a great development of civil aviation, for which there would seem to be a bright future in a country the size of India.

In the early days the capital required for the development of the railway system was provided by British companies, but most of the lines were later taken over by the Government, and now nearly the whole system is managed and controlled by the State. The railways are among the largest employers of labour in the country, and most of their requirements, except locomotives, are now manufactured in India in the railway workshops.

India's industrial development received a powerful impetus during the war of 1914-18, and in 1922 she was accorded a permanent seat on the governing body of the International Labour Office at Geneva as one of the eight leading industrial countries of the world, though this claim was based on the number of her agricultural and other workers, not on her manufactures. As a result of the great stimulus to machine-industry given by the present war there is little doubt that India is entering on a period of immense industrial development, and no one can foresee what will be the effect on conditions in the post-war world.

The two oldest manufacturing undertakings in India are the cotton and jute mills. The first cotton mill was set going in Bombay in the fifties of last century. To-day, although raw cotton is still one of India's main exports, there are nearly 400 cotton mills, turning out over 4000 million yards of cotton goods a year. The industry, built up from the first mainly under Indian management, is largely concentrated in the two towns of Bombay and Ahmedabad. The latter is nearer the cotton-fields and has during the last few years become almost as important a centre as Bombay itself. Before the last war 60 per cent of the cotton piece-goods used in India was imported. Now she can almost supply

her own needs. There has been a corresponding decline in the imports of cotton goods from Lancashire, with sad results for the Lancashire cotton workers. Imports of Lancashire goods have fallen from 3000 million yards before 1914 to little more than a tenth of that quantity, and consist mainly of fine cloth. An important contribution to this result has been the tariff imposed by the Indian Government to protect the industry from the competition not only of Britain but of Japan.

The jute industry was originally an entirely British, and more particularly Scottish, enterprise, developed during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Unlike the cotton mills, the jute mills cater mainly for export. They are almost entirely limited to Bengal, the chief jute-growing province, and are mainly concentrated on the banks of the Hooghly, near Calcutta. At one time, much of the jute crop was exported raw in bales of fibre, mainly to the jute factories of Dundee, but now more than half the crop is woven in the Indian mills into sandbags, sacks, and coarse cloth called hessian. It is the cheapest and strongest packing cloth in the world, and raw jute and manufactured jute together headed the list of India's exports in money value before the war. Jute was Germany's main import from India. The industry has gone through some bad times from over-production, but the war has brought a great new demand, especially for sandbags by the thousand million.

Until recent years, Indian capital fought very shy of business enterprise on a large scale. The jute, tea, coal, and shipping industries are the creation of British pioneers, who took the risks attendant on developing industry, arranging for distribution of goods, establishing markets, and training labour. They paved the way for Indian industrialists, who gradually brought in Indian capital. To-day it is reckoned that 70 per cent of the capital even of British-managed jute mills is in Indian hands.

The cotton industry has been from the first mainly an Indian enterprise, and so has another great but much younger industry, that of iron and steel. It was a member of the well-known Tata



family of Bombay, a family of Parsi merchants, who founded the Tata Iron and Steel Company on a site where a hill of almost pure iron was discovered conveniently near the great Bihar coal-fields. At the beginning of the last war, the Company had not long gone into production. To-day its steelworks are the largest in the British Empire, and produced in 1939-40 over a million tons of steel ingots, and three-quarters of a million tons of steel, besides over a million tons of pig iron. Round the works has grown up a well-planned town, Jamshedpur, of over 150,000 inhabitants, where the health and housing of the workers are well cared for by the management. British, American, and German technicians have all been employed in developing the processes in use, but it is interesting to recall that the secret of producing rustless iron was known to Indian iron workers in the days of the Gupta empire, as witnessed by the famous forged Iron Pillar in Delhi, dating from about A.D. 400, which still stands exposed to all weathers without harm.

As a result of the Reforms of 1919 India secured what is called 'Fiscal Autonomy', the right to protect her industries against foreign competition; and this has been used not only to give protection to her young and growing industries, such as iron and steel products, paper, and matches, but also to the old-established cotton and sugar industries. The iron and steel industry was the first to benefit by this policy, and its whole development has been greatly aided by a high import duty, together with Government subsidies.

Still more recently the same policy applied to the sugar industry has resulted in India becoming the world's largest producer of cane-sugar. For over twenty years now industrial development has been thus fostered by the Central Legislature and the Government of India, and in the period between the outbreak of the two world wars the number of factories coming under the Indian Factories Acts rose from under 3000 to over 10,000. More than two-thirds of the 1½ million workers in these factories were in the jute and cotton mills and in the 'engineering'

industries, including under that head railway workshops and saw-mills.

Other important manufacturing undertakings besides these are wool and paper mills, soap, glass, and cement factories, and the manufactures of chemicals and matches. The production of shellac from the resin secreted by the lac insect is one of the most ancient industries of India; the film industry, one of the most modern, is growing very rapidly. Printing presses turn out India's 150 daily papers in many different languages, and there is a large production of books.

A feature in the development of modern industry in India is the use of electric power. Coming late into the industrial field, Indian firms have been able to avail themselves of many recent inventions. The cotton mills of Bombay are driven by the hydro-electric plant erected by the Tata firm; other schemes supply current for industrial purposes in Madras, Mysore, the United Provinces, and the Punjab. India possesses almost unlimited resources of hydro-electric power from her great rivers, and many of the new large-scale irrigation works have been constructed so that this power may be used for future industrial developments. This is all the more important as, apart from cost of transport, so much of India's coal is of second quality, unsuitable for converting into coke.

In the Indian factories conditions in respect of length of hours, employment of women and children, guarding of machinery, etc., inside those factories which come under the Factories Acts are on the whole satisfactory, i.e. in all those factories which use power and employ more than twenty or, in some cases, more than ten persons. Mr Harold Butler, late Director of the International Labour Office at Genève, reported in 1938 after a visit to India that 'the conditions prevailing in large-scale industry in India do not compare unfavourably with those in many European countries'.<sup>1</sup>

About 20 per cent of the workers in the cotton and jute factories

<sup>1</sup> Report to I.L.O. on Problems of Industry in the East, p. 11.

are women, and many of the big firms have welfare schemes for their employees, crèches where children can be left, and so forth. But outside the factory housing conditions are often still very bad, though great efforts have been made to improve them of recent years, and a few firms provide model quarters. Difficulties are increased by the ignorance and low standard of living of industrial workers.

Trade unions are gradually developing, but here again there are many difficulties in the way of rapid progress. Until quite recently the labour force was constantly changing, and most workers remain villagers at heart and return to their village as soon as they can. Many go to work in factories or mines only during the off-season. It is hard for unions to keep up a regular membership which could organise collective bargaining; it is hard to find leaders among the workers themselves. Cultivators are often driven to the towns by debt or a year of bad harvest. Being almost entirely illiterate as well as strange to town life, both men and women workers fall largely into the power of the man 'jobber' or the woman *naikin* who engages them for the factory. But the number of registered unions has now risen to 750 with 650,000 members.<sup>1</sup> The railway and postal unions are the most stable. In August 1942, a Labour Conference was held in which for the first time Governments, employers, and workers were all represented.

At present, the numbers employed in what is called 'organised industry', i.e. factories, plantations, and mines, cannot compare with the numbers who carry on in their homes or in small groups the traditional arts and crafts of their country. Indian hand-made cottons, silks, and shawls have been famous for centuries. Our very word 'calico' comes from Calicut on the Malabar coast. In spite of the competition of the mills the handloom weaving of cotton still continues on a large scale and is the most important of India's village industries; others are dyeing and printing of cotton, and the making of carpets, matting, rope, and *bidis* (hand-made cigarettes). Beautiful silks with borders of untarnishable gold and

<sup>1</sup> *Indian Year Book*, 1942-43.

silver are still made in great quantity for ladies' *saris*, and masses of jewellery and ornaments for women of every class. Embroideries there are of all kinds and from all parts, in cotton, silk, wool, and tinsel. Fine carving in stone, wood, and ivory, and beautiful goldsmiths' and enamel work—these are still outstanding examples of Indian craftsmanship; while the common domestic utensils of pottery and brass are made in nearly every village, often in shapes of great charm. The crafts are carried on by their hereditary caste-groups, though for one reason or another many a man has left his original caste occupation.

Sometimes a picture of India is presented as if it were a country whose workers were being shamefully exploited for the benefit of the British, and as if vast sums of money were taken from India to be poured into the pockets of Englishmen. As a matter of fact, as has been mentioned, the protective tariffs imposed by the Government of India have almost driven British cotton goods out of the Indian market, and have greatly reduced the imports of several other articles. A third of the revenues of the Central Government come from customs duties. Just before the war India was buying from the United Kingdom rather less than a third of her imports, and was selling to it only about a third of her exports.

It is true that a large amount of British capital is privately invested in India, in both British and Indian companies, and that the interest on these investments is paid to the shareholders in Britain, just as is the interest on the still greater amount of British capital invested in the Argentine, in African gold mines, and in different oil companies.

What is known as the 'public debt of India' is in the main invested capital of another kind. For the development of the railways when they were taken over by Government, and for the financing of the great schemes of irrigation, loans had to be raised. British investors were willing to invest capital in these loans at a time when it was difficult to raise capital on equally favourable terms in India. Thus India incurred indebtedness to Britain, and the payment of the interest on these loans amounted to some

millions of pounds a year, sometimes referred to as the 'drain'. For some years before the war, however, India had a favourable trade balance, and since the war that favourable balance has been so greatly increased by the goods supplied by India to Britain for war purposes that this public debt, which in 1936 amounted to over 375 million pounds, has been almost entirely paid off in sterling. Almost all the railways, which alone were financed by loans of 600 million pounds, and all the irrigation schemes and other public works are therefore now owned by the Government of India, and will pass to Indian control, just as Indian capital is steadily replacing British capital in industry. India should, therefore, be in a very strong financial position after the war.

Looking back we can see that, in a comparatively short period, little less than an economic revolution has taken place. New sources of wealth have been discovered, a new class of workers has been created, presenting new possibilities of raising standards of living.

It seems as if India can hardly fail to proceed on the road of industrialisation on which she is now set, thus following the course advocated by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru instead of the one so ardently championed by Mr Gandhi of a return to hand-spinning and the simple life of the village community. It will be for self-governing India to try to balance wisely industrial with agricultural progress. The rapid and unplanned expansion of Indian towns in the last few years, and the growth of new slum areas on their outskirts, threaten India with one of the worst features of western industrialisation. To check this evil it is essential that there should be planned development.

## CHAPTER VIII

### INDIA'S ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE

How is this great country of India governed? One hears much about 'the political deadlock', but all the time the administration as a whole goes on—from the great Secretariat in New Delhi down to the smallest village over 1000 miles away.

In British India the administration is carried out in part by the Central Government, which is known as the 'Government of India', and in part by the Provincial Governments. The Government of India is directed from New Delhi by the Viceroy together with his Executive Council, and in its charge are matters concerning British India as a whole, viz. defence, foreign affairs, railways, customs duties, postal services, income-tax, currency, and certain subjects of legislation.

The Provincial Governments have charge of all other matters concerning the government of the eleven Provinces of British India including finance, land revenue and taxation, justice and police (often referred to as 'law and order'), education, public health, public works, agriculture, etc.

The Central Government of India is *not* responsible to the present central legislature which is called the Central Legislative Assembly, though it would have been to the new Federal Legislature, if the second portion of the new constitution of 1935 had come into force. But in the Provinces the ministries, composed entirely of Indians, *are* responsible to the Provincial Legislatures. It must however be remembered that this does not apply for the moment to five out of the seven Provinces where Congress governments voluntarily resigned soon after the outbreak of war.<sup>1</sup> In these Provinces government is for the time being carried on by the Governor and his official advisers.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter IX, p. 80.

But when it comes to the actual work of administering the country, who keeps the wheels of government running smoothly and efficiently? All through the changes in the constitution of British India in its progress towards responsible self-government the pattern of the administration has not changed. It has been built up during many years and tested in many times of strain and stress, of flood and famine, of earthquake and pestilence, of riots and 'civil disobedience', and has stood firm and come successfully through all trials.

The steel frame, as it is often called, of the whole administration is still the Indian Civil Service. Until twenty years ago it was almost entirely British and attracted many of the most brilliant young men from the universities of Great Britain and of Ireland, who gladly devoted their lives to India, and built up for the service the highest standards of integrity and ability. They were bureaucrats, it is true, in the sense of a bureaucrat being one who concentrates much power in his own office, but the District Officer was also in a very real sense the father of the people under his charge. 'Sir, you are my father and my mother', was, and still is, a common mode of address used by those seeking an interview with the Collector or Deputy Commissioner, as the District Officer is variously called in different parts of the country. And then the visitor will proceed to ask advice on the most varied subjects, perhaps about a quarrel with his neighbour over some land, or about the marriage of his grandson, or still more intimate family matters.

The District Officer is respected and trusted by all creeds and castes, by Hindu as well as Moslem, and many a communal riot has been averted by his timely intervention. Indeed, it has been the tradition of the Indian Civil Service that the very first duty of its officers is to prevent any outbreak of violence in the area under their charge. They certainly have never furnished any basis for the accusation sometimes made that the British have fomented communal feeling on the Roman principle of 'divide and rule'.

Altogether there are less than 1200 members of the Civil Service, and it is clear that it could only be with the willing consent of the masses of the people that so small a number of officers could have carried on the government of so vast a population. More than half of the Indian Civil Service are now Indians. But, British or Indian, in these days they are no longer bureaucrats. They loyally carry out in the Provinces the instructions of the Indian ministers under whom they serve; and in doing so they have succeeded in preserving many of the high traditions of their predecessors who built up modern India by their devotion, foresight, and ability.

There are about 250 Districts in British India, most of them of the size of an average English county, and the District Officer is responsible for the general order and well-being of his District as well as for the collection of land and other revenue. He has, of course, serving under him, a number of officials of different grades down to the headman of each village, the humble village accountant who keeps the maps and records for land revenue, and the village policeman. And he has as his colleagues the District and Sessions Judge, the Superintendent of Police, the Civil Surgeon, and the Executive Engineer of the Public Works Department.

The police forces, since the passing of the Government of India Act of 1935, have been placed under the control of the Indian ministries. About 400 of the 600 officers in the highest grade—the Indian Police Service—are still British, but in the police forces as a whole, which total nearly 200,000, the British element is very small. Of course, like the Civil Service and the Police Service, all the other Government services, the education, railway, engineering, medical, and scientific services have been organised and built up by the British in the past, but very few people realise how far the administration of India has already been transferred to Indian hands.

Even in the highest grade, in what are called the All India and Class I Central Services (about 4000 posts, including the Civil



Service and Police Service), there are now more Indians than British. Of the general administration and Provincial services as a whole, the British element forms a very small proportion, while the lower classes of subordinates have always been recruited entirely from Indians.

Nearly half of the Judges of the seven High Courts of India are Indian, and the Viceroy now has on his Executive Council ten Indian and only four British members, including the Commander-in-Chief.

In the postal services, which are among the largest and most efficient in the world, and which employ over 100,000 persons, there are only some sixty Europeans. The department deals alike with the despatch of messages by cable and wireless, and the delivery of letters by village mail-runners who think nothing of carrying letters ten miles into the jungle to the camp of some official on tour. In the course of a year the department handles over 1200 million articles, sends off over 18½ million telegrams, and collects over 11 million pounds sterling by its very efficient cash-on-delivery parcels service; this was in use in India twenty years before it was introduced into England.

For social service in India the field is vast, and though a good beginning has been made, everyone realises that it is only a beginning and that there is immense scope for development.

The basis of all social progress is education, and, in spite of all the efforts of education departments, the task of educating the millions of rural India is on so great a scale that progress seems very slow. India possesses an elaborate system of education with primary, middle, and high schools, universities and technical institutes. In British India alone there were in 1939-40 nearly a quarter of a million educational institutions with over 15½ million pupils. But the masses of the people of India are still illiterate, both in Provinces and States. If they want to write a letter they must go to a professional 'letter-writer'. Nevertheless, the new Census shows a very real advance during the last ten years, from 1931 to 1941, greater than ever before, especially in the

education of girls, for whom the literacy figure has gone up by 150 per cent.

The most literate as well as the most illiterate regions of India are to be found among the Indian States. Travancore, Cochin, and Baroda are far ahead of British India in this respect. In Travancore roughly half, in Cochin roughly a third, in Baroda a quarter, and in Bombay, the most advanced Province of British India, a fifth of the population (men and women taken together) is literate. In the States of Hyderabad and Kashmir the figure is only 7 per cent. For India as a whole, including both Provinces and States, the literacy figures are 19 per cent for males and 5 per cent for females, i.e. 12 per cent for both sexes reckoned together.

For over twenty years now, i.e. ever since the Reforms of 1919 came into force in 1921, education in British India has been under Indian control. Each Province has its own department of education, and there is considerable difference in progress between them. Secondary and university education are well advanced, but for a variety of reasons primary education has lagged behind.

At the upper end of the educational ladder India is well provided with eighteen universities (three of them in the Indian States) with altogether over 140,000 students, including some 8000 women. A grave problem is the very serious unemployment among graduates. A university degree has been regarded as the avenue not only to the coveted Government services, but to almost every career. Efforts are now being made to divert more boys in the secondary schools to practical vocational training instead of preparing them for matriculation and a university course. Although, generally speaking, university standards are lower than in Britain, the Indian universities have produced many men of outstanding ability, who to-day fill high positions of leadership in politics, in the professions, and in the public services. Among the scientists six Indians are now Fellows of the Royal Society.

The courses at the universities (except in the Osmania University, Hyderabad) are given almost entirely in English, and even in the high schools all the lessons in the upper classes and the

matriculation examination have been until quite recently conducted through the medium of English. This accounts for the wonderful command of the English language possessed by so many educated Indians. Although only a few millions are literate in English,<sup>1</sup> perhaps no other factor has been more influential in promoting the unity of India than the use of English all over the country.

Indian ministers have shown undoubted zeal and enthusiasm for primary education, but they have not been able to overcome the difficulties inherent in this great problem—difficulties of finance, of the provision and training of teachers, of overcoming apathy and prejudice, and of keeping pace with a population increasing at the present rate of that of India.

Ninety per cent of all the schools in British India are primary schools, but the great majority of the children are taken away by their parents as soon as they can be of any use at home or in the fields, and before they have learned to read and write properly. This and the illiteracy of the vast majority of the mothers largely account for the slow spread of literacy. Although matters have improved in the last few years, still in 1939 only just over 30 per cent of the boys and less than 17 per cent of the girls stayed at school until they reached Class IV. Only those who do so can be reckoned as becoming permanently literate.

Girls are still far behind boys. The customs of early marriage and purdah, and the reluctance of parents to send girls to school, and of local bodies to devote money for girls' education, have retarded advance. And the backwardness of the girls affects the boys also. Things are now changing, as shown by the striking increase in recent years in the numbers of girls at every stage of school and college; girls are crowding into boys' schools as well as the schools for girls.

A great drive against illiteracy was inaugurated in 1938–39

<sup>1</sup> According to the 1931 Census rather more than 3½ millions were literate in English. Corresponding figures are not given in the Census of 1941.

under Provincial self-government, and thousands of classes for adults were opened by volunteer teachers, both men and women. It needs the dynamic of a national movement and sustained enthusiasm to carry through a task of such magnitude on the scale necessary for success.

The great shortage of women teachers, who are needed for the teaching of small boys as well as girls, is another grave handicap to the spread of primary education. Of recent years serious efforts have been made in many Provinces to make the lessons more lively and practical, and to bring the teaching in village schools more into relation with village life, so that the peasants may feel that school education for their children is really worth while. The Punjab Government has adopted with success new methods which were first worked out by the American Mission at Moga. Still more recently, the scheme of 'basic primary education', sponsored by Mr Gandhi, has been taken up with enthusiasm in many places. It was originally devised to centre on the teaching of a handicraft like spinning or weaving.

Compulsory primary education is the goal in all the Provinces, and in most of them a small beginning has been made in certain selected areas, especially in the big towns. But it is no good trying to force compulsion until it can be made effective, until—apart from questions of finance—teachers and inspectors can be provided, and parents are willing to cooperate.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the service to the cause of education rendered by missionaries from Europe and from America to all classes in India regardless of caste or creed, and at all stages from infant school to college. They were the pioneers of girls' education. Much of the social work of India owes its origin and inspiration to their efforts and example. They still carry on many very popular and successful educational institutions of all kinds, and without any insistence on the pupils becoming converts to Christianity. 'No reference to education would be complete', writes an Indian journalist, Mr T. A. Raman, in a recent book, 'without grateful mention

of the magnificent work that Christian missions have done in the country.<sup>1</sup>

This is no less true with regard to work for the health of the people. As soon as we come to consider the organisation of public health services for India on Western lines, we are brought up against the magnitude of the problem. We have a vast, illiterate, and mainly rural population with many unhygienic domestic customs, deeply ingrained for generations. We have a country particularly liable to serious epidemics, where fevers such as malaria are always rife, and where resistance to disease is lowered by poverty and faulty nutrition. The number of women available as nurses is negligible. To provide adequate medical and health services is a formidable task, and if much remains to be done we must not forget what has been accomplished.

The medical services in India have a fine record of achievement and of successful research in tropical medicine. It was due to Sir Ronald Ross of the Indian Medical Service that the source of malaria infection was traced to the *anopheles* mosquito. Over a million people still die every year from malaria alone, although the mortality has been greatly reduced by the wide distribution of quinine arranged for by Government; and the Departments of Public Health, which have long been set up in every Province, are becoming more active in rousing people to organise anti-mosquito measures, such as the destruction of breeding-grounds. Progress here again is slow on account of the difficulty of educating public opinion.

It is thanks to the splendid efforts of the medical services that the terrible epidemics of cholera, plague, and smallpox have been largely controlled, and the number of their victims reduced by many hundreds of thousands under the British Raj. At all the big fairs and bathing festivals, to which people in India flock in thousands from all over the countryside, most elaborate precautions are now taken to prevent outbreaks of cholera, and these measures have proved very successful. Anti-plague inoculation, discovered

<sup>1</sup> *India*, by T. A. Raman (Oxford University Press), p. 80.

in India by a Russian scientist, Haffkine, and campaigns for the destruction of infected rats have checked epidemics of plague, from which many millions have died since it was introduced from China into India. An army of vaccinators against smallpox is employed in every Province. In getting people to take preventive measures and in spreading knowledge of the elementary rules of hygiene, the Boy Scouts and the Junior Red Cross are doing excellent work. Health statistics in India are imperfect (and there were none in the pre-British period), but the death-rate, though still very high, especially among infants, is considerably lower than it was fifty years ago.

Generally speaking, though there is much overcrowding and squalor in the towns, they are now fairly well provided with hospitals and sanitary services, maternity and child-welfare centres, but very little has been done for rural areas. In the villages there is generally a high standard of personal cleanliness, but the village site is often dirty, full of refuse, flies, and stagnant pools, and the village tank is often polluted though its water is used nevertheless both for cooking and drinking. It is the rural areas, therefore, which suffer most from lack of proper sanitation and a pure water supply, from lack of doctors, hospitals, and maternity services, and from lack of funds to provide these things. Yet even here better communications are bringing more villages in touch with towns where hospital treatment is a possibility; and travelling dispensaries are being sent to wider areas each year.

It is in the provision of hospitals, dispensaries, and medical aid, especially for women, and in supplementing the efforts of Government, that the missions have played so large a part. Purdah women are still carried in curtained litters to see the lady doctor at a Mission hospital, or at a Government hospital, for women. Until quite recent years almost the only trained nurses in India were Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians. The same causes which have hampered the education of girls—conservatism, purdah, and child-marriage, together with the reluctance of Indian parents to allow their daughters to take up careers outside the home—have

stood in the way of progress in social service. It is only when qualified women become available in really large numbers all over the country that rapid progress will be made.

Yet with the great advance of the women's movement in the last twenty years many more Hindu women, and also, though to a lesser degree, Mohammedan women, are now coming forward for training as teachers and doctors, nurses and health visitors. There are already Indian women lawyers, university lecturers, honorary magistrates, members of legislatures. An Indian woman, Mrs V. Pandit, has been a cabinet minister in the United Provinces, and another, Dr M. P. Lukose, Surgeon-general in Travancore. The All-India Women's Conference forms a bond between progressive women of all communities. India possesses to-day a small but growing company of highly trained and very able women who are determined to devote themselves to the service of their country, and who mean to rouse more and more women to their country's need. They are now taking up, on a nation-wide scale, the burden of the tasks which lie before them. Nor is this gallant company unmindful of the debt which they owe to their sisters of the West. It has been said that the first and most important change that would strike a person who died in India a hundred years ago and came to life again to-day would be the revolution in the position of women.<sup>1</sup>

It is also of fundamental importance to rouse the masses of the people as a whole, men and women, peasants and town workers alike, to desire better living conditions. One must remember that although there are a large number of Indian newspapers, very few people in the villages can read them or be appealed to by advertisements and notices. Picture posters, magic lanterns, plays and films are all being used to press the needed lessons home, but still only on a small scale. Broadcasting, which is now well established, should be of great help in this campaign, but there were in January 1943 only nine broadcasting stations and 162,000 licenses for the whole of British India.

<sup>1</sup> Mr Natarajan in the *Indian Social Reformer*, 25 September 1937.

It is only in comparatively recent years that the educated classes have concerned themselves with the welfare of the masses of rural India. Before that time it was left to Government departments, but now many efforts for village improvement and 'rural reconstruction', including the encouragement of village industries, are being made by Indian and British workers, by Provincial Governments and by unofficial voluntary organisations.

There is no lack of knowledge of the remedies for present ills. They have been clearly stated in the very valuable surveys of the Royal Commission on Agriculture (1928) and the Royal Commission on Labour (1931), and in other more recent inquiries such as that of Sir Robert McCarrison on nutrition. A comprehensive survey of the whole field of Public Health with a view to post-war developments is being made by a new Government Commission of 1943, under the chairmanship of Sir Joseph Bhore.

There are two major difficulties to be faced; the first is to combat apathy, ignorance, and fatalism; the second is to finance schemes of improvement. The Government of India has allotted special funds for rural reconstruction, and since the Constitution of 1935 came into force Indian ministers have set themselves to stir up greater popular enthusiasm for the social services, and have increased the grants for them. This policy is also being carried on in the Provinces where, owing to the resignation of the Congress ministries, democratic governments are no longer functioning.

The quickened conscience of our times with regard to the social and economic conditions under which the masses of the people live has spread to India as to other countries of the world, and it is now generally recognised that many reforms can only be brought about by Indians themselves. To improve the well-being of the masses will be the greatest task of the Indian governments of the future.



## CHAPTER IX

### INDIA'S ADVANCE TO SELF-GOVERNMENT

It is impossible to understand the political situation in India to-day without knowing something of the past history which has led up to it. Few people realise how far British India has already travelled on the road to responsible self-government.

A clause in Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858 declared:

And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge.

It was many years before effective expression was given to this clause, though as long ago as 1861 a few Indian members were nominated to the newly formed Legislative Councils. After 1892 there was in them a considerable Indian element, recommended for nomination by various bodies, such as big municipalities.

But during the present century the whole conception of the political relations between the two countries has changed. The first great advance was made by the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909, so called from the names of the then Secretary of State and Viceroy. They introduced for the first time the principle of *election*, as distinct from nomination, to the Provincial Councils and provided that in all of them non-officials should have a majority over officials. An Indian was appointed to the Viceroy's Executive Council and to each Provincial Executive Council. Two Indians were included in the Secretary of State's Council in England. For the first time also, in deference to Mohammedan wishes, the principle of *separate electorates* for minorities was adopted. In sponsoring these reforms Lord Morley had no idea of suggesting a system of parliamentary democracy for India. On the contrary, he went out of his way to disclaim any such intention.

But the political awakening of modern India had already begun.

The Nationalist movement is indeed the natural result and direct development of the system of English education adopted by Government from the time of Lord Macaulay, and of the teaching of British history and literature with their emphasis on love of liberty and self-governing institutions. Macaulay himself, in a speech in Parliament in 1833, before he went to India, foresaw that 'in some future age' India might demand institutions on a European model, and he added 'Whether such a day will ever come I know not, but never will I attempt to avert or retard it. Whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English history.'

The Indian National Congress was formed as long ago as 1885 with the encouragement of several British sympathisers, official as well as unofficial. At first its influence was small, but from small beginnings it has gradually grown into the powerful party organisation of to-day. Apart from the Congress party the demand of educated Indians in general for representative institutions and a greater share in the government of their country has increased from year to year. From early in the century political 'unrest', fomented by extremists, has resulted at intervals in outbreaks of terrorism and assassination, especially in Bengal.

In recognition of the growth of nationalist feeling, and of the great part played by India during the last war, the British Government decided on a momentous change which was announced by Mr Montagu as Secretary of State in August 1917. He declared the new British policy to be that of

the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the Empire.

The words 'gradual' and 'progressive' were expressly inserted in order to give time for training in parliamentary government. Britain has not shown herself unresponsive to the demands of politically-minded India, but, as Professor Coupland puts it, 'the tide of Indian nationalism has outpaced the British response'.

The Reforms of 1919, which followed Mr Montagu's Declara-





26, Meeting of Congress.

27. Gandhi and Nehru.



tion, mark the next great step on the road to self-government. They gave a constitution to India by which certain departments in the Provincial Governments were immediately transferred to Indian ministers responsible to the legislatures, while others, the 'reserved' subjects, were retained by officials. This is the system known as 'dyarchy'. It was never meant to be more than a transitional stage, and it was arranged that its working should be reviewed after a period of ten years.

The Reforms did not go nearly far enough to satisfy the Indian National Congress. The party had found a new leader in Mr M. K. Gandhi, whose name first became known as the organiser of a passive resistance movement among Indians domiciled in South Africa. This remarkable man, the best-known Indian of modern times, launched his first movement of 'non-violent non-cooperation' or 'civil disobedience' against the Act of 1919. Nationalist feeling had been much strengthened at this time by the stringent measures taken to suppress serious outbreaks of violence and 'unrest', especially at Amritsar, where General Dyer's actions roused the greatest bitterness. Eventually the non-cooperation movement weakened, and Congressmen, under the leadership of Mr C. R. Das, entered the new legislatures.

With the faith of the mystic, Mr Gandhi combines the astuteness of the politician. His hold over the masses has not diminished. They reverence him as a saint, almost as a god. Through him the Congress organisation has spread to the villages. His ascetic life and his identification of himself with the poor make a special appeal to the Hindu peasantry, and his belief in non-violence is founded on the ancient Hindu doctrine of *ahimsa* (the abstention from harming any living creature). He has developed it into a political weapon which he believes could be used as an alternative to war in the form of non-violent resistance to aggression. He hopes that India, by demonstrating the power of non-violence, may set an example to the world; but in practice, mass non-violence has generally resulted in violence.

By the Act of 1919 India was definitely launched on a demo-

cratic system of government on British lines. In anticipation of her new national status Indian representatives signed the Peace Treaties, and India became an original member of the League of Nations. There was perhaps not enough recognition of the difficulties in applying a democratic parliamentary system to a country where the divisions into parties are based, not on divergent party programmes, as in Britain and the United States, but on differences between permanent communal groups. No doubt it was hoped that in practice fresh groups would emerge, more strongly united by common economic interests than by communal ties, but except in the Punjab and in Bengal that hope has been largely disappointed.

The difficulty of reconciling conflicting communal claims accounts for much of the unhappy delay in the attainment by India of the fully self-governing status which was already implicit in the Declaration of 1917. It is true that the Congress party does include some members of all communities, and indeed claims to represent India as a whole, but actually it remains a predominantly Hindu organisation, opposed by the Moslem League, the leading organisation of the Mohammedans. Congress includes among its members men of widely differing political views, from big industrialists and capitalists to socialists and communists. One wing follows Mr Gandhi in his advocacy of non-violence under all circumstances, and another follows Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who believes in militant resistance to aggression. Unlike Mr Gandhi, Pandit Nehru believes in rapid industrialisation for India, more or less on the Russian model.

Another political organisation of importance is the Hindu Mahasabha, which represents the special interests of orthodox Hinduism. Mention must also be made of the relatively small group of Liberals, who, though few in number, derive their influence from the intellectual distinction of their leaders, including Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

But we must return to constitutional developments. Before the ten years had passed after which the working of the Reforms of

1919 were to be reviewed, a Statutory Commission, known from the name of its Chairman as the Simon Commission, was appointed to report on further advance. Then followed a series of Round Table Conferences in London, beginning in 1930, in which many Indians, representing various sections of opinion, and including some of the Princes, took part. Next came the sittings of a Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament. The legislation and financial arrangements involved were complex and difficult, the number of interests to be considered very large. Finally, after no less than seven years of discussion, a new constitution was passed into law by the Government of India Act of 1935, the first part of which is in force to-day.

What were the conditions in India during this time? Indian sentiment had been deeply hurt by the exclusion of Indians from the Simon Commission, which was composed entirely of members of the two Houses of the British Parliament. The Congress party, greatly grown in strength and influence, was in full revolt, and at their meeting at Lahore in December 1929 passed a Resolution in favour of complete independence. This was followed up in 1930 by another 'civil disobedience' movement on a wider scale than ever before, led by Mr Gandhi in person. As a consequence he and many thousands of his followers were arrested. In the end the movement was called off as the result of a truce arranged by the Viceroy, Lord Irwin (now Lord Halifax); and Mr Gandhi himself attended the second Round Table Conference as the official and only representative of Congress.

But he and other delegates alike failed to reconcile the claims of the various communities, who still insisted on separate communal representation, and were each anxious to safeguard their own interests. Finally, as no agreement could be reached on the number of seats in the legislatures to be allotted to Mohammedans in the different Provinces, to the Sikhs in the Punjab, or to the Depressed Classes, the British Government was forced to make a decision, in what is known as the Communal Award. The Award was subsequently modified through the intervention of

Mr Gandhi. He began a 'fast unto death' as a protest against the distinction of the Depressed Classes from the general body of Hindus by the institution for them of separate electorates. A compromise was finally reached by reserving a larger number of seats for members of the Depressed Classes, but the candidates for them were to be voted for by the whole Hindu electorate and not only by the Depressed Classes themselves.

An unexpected development took place at the opening of the first Round Table Conference when the Maharaja of Bikaner announced the willingness of the Princes to consider entering a Federation of the whole of India. As a result, the Act of 1935, which marked a great new advance, was divided into two main parts, Part I dealing with the government of the Provinces, and Part II with the establishment of a Federal Government and Parliament, uniting Provinces and States.

Part I gave immediate responsible self-government in all internal affairs (often called provincial autonomy) to the Provinces of British India, now numbering eleven. Responsibility for finance, 'law and order', and other departments passed to the control of Indian ministries, formed very much on the lines of cabinet government in Britain, and subject only to certain emergency powers of the Governors known as 'safeguards'. The Act provided for a great extension of the franchise, estimated to give a vote to over 40 per cent of the adult male population and to about 10 per cent of the adult women. Separate communal electorates were continued in accordance with the modified Communal Award to which we have referred.

Part I of the Act came into operation in April 1937, and the Congress party, by far the largest and best organised political party in India, obtained majorities in seven of the eleven Provinces. Congress ministries found in practice that they need not have feared the use of the emergency powers of the Governors, which for a few months after the elections deterred the party from accepting office. It is generally recognised that, save in one respect, referred to below, these ministries worked with success and



enthusiasm; they initiated a number of measures of social and economic reform, dealing especially with agricultural indebtedness, the promotion of new methods in education, and the introduction of prohibition.

At the outbreak of war Congress governments were in power in Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces, Central Provinces, the North-West Frontier Province, Bihar, and Orissa; and coalition governments, with Moslem premiers, in the Punjab, Bengal, Assam, and Sind.

Thus Provincial self-government seemed well-established, but in the two years 1937-39 communal tension had increased to an alarming degree. This was the exception to the successful functioning of the Congress governments referred to above. It was said to be due to the non-inclusion of Moslems in the Congress ministries unless they were members of the Congress party, to the alleged neglect of Moslem interests in some of the Congress Provinces, and to the oppression of Moslems by minor officials. The All-India Moslem League, the chief Mohammedan political organisation, gained rapidly in strength and influence; and its skilful leader, Mr Jinnah, himself at one time a member of Congress, became bitterly opposed to Congress rule.

At the same time opposition to the Federal scheme, Part II of the Act of 1935, was growing. The Moslem League opposed it on the ground that it would mean permanent Hindu domination. The Congress party opposed it because the representatives of the States in the Federal Parliament were to be nominated by the Princes, and not elected. The Princes themselves became nervous about their position in relation to Congress, and delayed the negotiations for their accession to the Federation.

Such was the situation in September 1939, when India, not having yet attained the status of a Dominion, found herself, under the existing constitution, automatically at war without the formal consent of the legislatures. This caused deep resentment, although the Congress party was in full sympathy with the Allied cause, and had been foremost in condemning aggression in

China and Abyssinia, and the 'betrayal of democracy' in Spain and Czechoslovakia. The Working Committee of the party, often called the Congress High Command, immediately asked for a declaration of war aims as applied to India, and, dissatisfied with the Viceroy's reply, ordered the seven Congress ministries to resign. Hence since October 1939 self-government in their Provinces has ceased to function, except in Orissa where a ministry was re-formed in November 1941, and in the North-West Frontier Province where a ministry was formed in May 1943. Instead, the Governors, aided by officials of the Civil Service, have taken over direct administration. In the remaining Provinces, comprising together a population of over 100 millions, i.e. more than a third of the population of British India, there has been no break in the working of democratic government (save for less than a month, in Bengal, in the spring of 1943).

As soon as the Congress ministries resigned, Mr Jinnah took the opportunity to declare on behalf of the Moslem community, numbering in British India over 81 millions, their determination never again to consent to Hindu majority rule, and their fixed opposition to any form of democratic government based on a counting of heads. Since then Hindu-Moslem relations have deteriorated still further, and the Moslem League has developed its policy of 'Pakistan', founded on the claim that the Mohammedans are not a 'minority' but a 'separate nation'. It means the creation of independent Mohammedan States in the areas where Mohammedans are in the majority. It would destroy the unity of India, and is vehemently opposed by Congress.

A few weeks after the outbreak of war Lord Linlithgow announced that preparations for the Federation of All-India under the Act of 1935 would be suspended. Had it been accepted it would have led inevitably to Dominion Status. As matters stand to-day, near though India is to the attainment of complete self-government, a constitution which all her great component sections will agree to work has still to be devised.

*Note.* For the political developments since 1940 see Chapter XI.

## CHAPTER X

### INDIA & THE WAR

INDIA is playing a great part in the war—a far greater part than she did in the war of 1914-18, though she then sent more than a million men to fight overseas. In spite of the political difficulties, all the sympathies of India have been with the Allies from the very beginning of the conflict. In the years before the war Congress politicians were loud in their denunciations of Japanese, Fascist, and Nazi aggression and of the policy of appeasement, even though they have withheld their cooperation in the war effort. But from all other sections of the people, from prince to peasant, help in men, money, or material has flowed in generous measure. The multifarious demands of modern warfare on services and resources of all kinds have met with a remarkable response.

In 1939 the peace-time strength of the army in India consisted of about 180,000 troops of the regular Indian Army and about 50,000 regular British troops. The army was largely concentrated north of the Ganges, and its main task, apart from the maintenance of internal security, was the defence of the North-West Frontier, which involved keeping constant watch over the turbulent tribesmen living just across the border.

The Indian Army is a highly trained professional army, recruited entirely on a voluntary basis. Its officers belong to two main categories, those holding King's Commissions, who before the war were almost all British, and those holding Viceroy's Commissions who are all Indians. It has a proud record of gallantry and service in many campaigns and has won fresh laurels in the present war. Though recruited mainly from the 'martial races' of the north-west, it contained even before 1939 considerable elements from Central India and from Bombay and Madras. More than half the whole force came from the Punjab, the Pro-

vince where physique and nutrition are the finest in the country. About two-thirds were Hindus and Sikhs, and one-third Moham-medans. The warrior races famous in Indian history, the Rajputs, Sikhs, and Marathas, were all well represented, together with peasant clans such as the Dogras and Jats of the Punjab and United Provinces. Among the best-known regiments are the Gurkhas, brave sturdy hillmen from the allied but independent Hindu border-kingdom of Nepal, who have served in the Indian Army for nearly a hundred and forty years.

The burden on the finances of the Government of India of the cost of the Army, which absorbed about a quarter of the total pre-war revenues, Central and Provincial, has long been one of the main grievances of nationalist India. On the British side the problem of defence was regarded as the most formidable obstacle to the complete transfer of power to a self-governing India, and defence remained a 'reserved' subject under the Act of 1935.

After the war of 1914-18 Indians were made eligible for King's Commissions, and a few selected candidates were trained in England at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst together with British cadets. But there was a general demand for more rapid Indianisation of the officer ranks, and in 1932 an Indian 'Sandhurst' was opened at Dehra Dûn. Starting with eight units, a considerably larger number were at the outbreak of war in process of being staffed entirely by Indian officers. An Indian regiment of artillery was constituted in 1935. A few months before the war a committee under Lord Chatfield recommended extensive mechanisation and modernisation of the Indian Army. The cost was to be mainly borne by the British Government, which was also to increase its annual contribution to military expenditure. But war broke out very soon after the orders for re-equipment had been placed, and before any of the material could be delivered.

Since then the whole position in relation to the Indian Army has been transformed. The war has swept away hesitations and brought about changes that might have taken years to accom-

plish. No longer does defence pivot on the North-West Frontier but on Burma and the Middle East. Recruitment, still entirely voluntary, exceeds two millions, and extends to districts, classes, and castes never before represented. The high percentage of technical personnel required in a modern mechanised army has enabled men from many parts of the country, even where the average physique is not high, to take a place in the fighting services. The Indian Army is at present the only large voluntary army in the world.

Recruitment to the ranks of Indian officers has been immensely expanded, and all units throughout the Services have been opened to them. The Indian Sandhurst has been enlarged, and other Officers' Training Schools founded where British and Indian cadets are trained together. Forty per cent of the officers recruited since the outbreak of war are Indians. Specialist courses in the many different branches of modern warfare and schools of instruction of all kinds have been provided. Thousands of men have been trained as motor transport drivers, mechanics, wireless operators, armourers, etc. Paratroops are being raised, and the parachutes they use are made in India of Indian silk.

Nearly five hundred thousand troops have been sent overseas. A contingent served in France in 1940; in Hong Kong, Malaya, and Burma losses were severe; in Eritrea and Libya, historic regiments, now mechanised and armed with modern weapons, won fresh glory. The Fourth Indian Division, whose exploits have become world famous, was in the forefront of the fighting throughout the Libyan, Abyssinian, and Tunisian campaigns. Without the assistance of India, Lord Wavell has stated, the Allies could not have held the Middle East. It was India's troops that helped to hold not only Egypt but also Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and Persia. Their gallantry is reflected in the long list of distinctions gained by all ranks.

Troops from the Indian States have fought side by side with troops from British India, as they have done in nearly every campaign since the beginning of the nineteenth century. After the

war of 1914-18 the troops of the States were reorganised as the Indian States Forces, and brought up to a standard similar to that of the forces of the Indian Army. In 1938 their strength was about 45,000 and since the war many new battalions have been raised. Forces supplied by the States include mechanised units, artillery, cavalry, infantry, sappers and miners, and mule corps. In addition the States are providing labour corps, ambulances, and hospitals, and are cooperating with the Central Government in training schemes and industrial expansions. Many of their units are serving overseas, and a number of Princes have visited their troops in different theatres of war.

At sea the main responsibility for the defence of India with her 5000 miles of coast line has always rested on British naval sea-power. Indian naval forces—constituted into the Royal Indian Navy in 1934—consisted at the outbreak of war of only a few small vessels used for coastal defence and escort duties. Since then the Indian Navy has been very greatly strengthened, at first by the chartering of merchant ships, and later by the addition of warships and by the building for the first time in Indian shipyards of minesweepers, motor torpedo boats and submarine chasers. Personnel has been increased to more than ten times pre-war numbers, recruited from many Indian races, and commissions are open to Indians and Europeans alike. Great progress has been made in providing training establishments. They include a new anti-submarine school, the largest in the Commonwealth outside England, a torpedo school, and a gunnery school. From early in the war the Royal Indian Navy has done valuable service in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf on convoy duty and coastal patrol. In the final assault on Massawa in Eritrea it was an Indian vessel that led the way. The Royal Indian Navy helped valiantly in Malaya, and in the evacuation of 40,000 Indians from Burma ports. Later it took part in the invasion of Sicily. Now grown into a powerful force protecting the coasts of India, it is ready to play its part in the eventual offensive against Japan.

Nor must we forget the contribution of India's 40,000 gallant

merchant seamen or *lascars*—the traditional sailors of India—who form no less than a quarter of the crews of the whole British Merchant Service, and who are serving in all parts of the world. Not a few of them have been bombed, torpedoed, or taken prisoner on the high seas while carrying on their work unflinchingly in the hard conditions of war.

The Indian Air Force, as apart from the R.A.F., in which many Indians are serving, is a very young force. At the outbreak of war it consisted of only a single squadron, intended for operations on the North-West Frontier. Its officers, like those of the Indian Navy, were trained in England. Directly war began steps were taken to embark on a scheme of great expansion, and to establish training schools for all branches of the service. The civilian flying clubs of India, which had an enthusiastic membership before the war, provided an ample pool of pilots and observers. Expansion was only delayed by the need for a sufficient supply of aircraft and for the adequate training of the large ground staff required. The main Technical Training and Flying School is at Ambala in the Punjab.

A few units of the Indian Air Force, entirely manned by Indians, operated in Burma, and were congratulated on their performance by Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Peirse. Ten Indian squadrons are now fully equipped. Speaking in New Delhi in September 1943, Sir Richard Peirse said 'A very large air force has been built up in India. We have covered the face of India with aerodromes and great training establishments and an enormous organisation for maintenance, repairs, and salvage. We have built up air routes in the north, south, east and west and supplied them with their communications and meteorological services and all those things which are essential for the movement of aircraft about a great continent.'

Up to June 1943 the casualties to India's fighting services as a whole amounted to over 100,000 (of whom more than 80 per cent are reported as missing and prisoners, mostly lost in Malaya).

India's contribution to the economic war front has been as

important as her contribution to the fighting services. Her strategic position between the Middle and the Far East and her great resources make her the natural supply centre for the Allied forces east of Suez. It was therefore fitting that Delhi should be the chosen headquarters of the Eastern Group Supply Council. This was set up early in 1941 as the result of a conference of representatives of the United Kingdom, India, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the Eastern Colonies, with the object of pooling resources and making the countries of the Eastern hemisphere as self-sufficing as possible.

During the first two and a half years of the North African campaign India was responsible for supplying this theatre of war with the bulk of its stores. Railway and engineering equipment of all kinds has been supplied to the Near and Middle East, as well as much of the material and staff for the remodelling of the Persian railways. More than 1,500,000 tons of supplies, from railway wagons and steel sheets to electric torches and trouser buttons, were sent from India during the long campaign which ended in the victory of Tunisia.

The growth of India's industrial output has been remarkable especially in respect of weapons and war equipment never previously made in India, and in spite of many initial handicaps absent in countries more industrially advanced. As soon as pressing demands allowed, technicians and plant were sent from Britain and the United States. It is true that heavy equipment (including combustion engines) has still to come mostly from abroad, but owing to the great development of the steel industry immense strides have been made. Its output has already increased by over 40 per cent, and the industry is making many new types of special steels such as bullet-proof armour plate, high-speed tool steel, and stainless steel. India is now producing armoured fighting vehicles, and automatic weapons, as well as her own machine tools.

The ordnance factories, greatly expanded and assisted by the railway workshops and other engineering factories, are turning

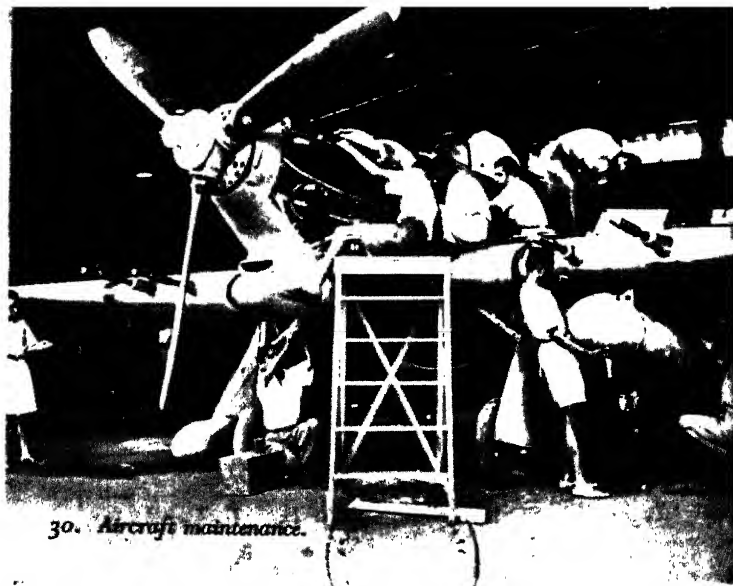


28. Making an armoured carrier.



29. Making mine containers.





30. *Aircraft maintenance.*



31. *Sikh troops in North Africa.*

out vast quantities of shells and small arms ammunition, and also complete guns and gun-carriages of various types. Much has been done to increase the output of explosives. T.N.T. is being manufactured, and many chemicals are being produced for the first time in India, as well as scientific stores, such as binoculars and compasses. Research has made possible the use of substitutes for a number of articles previously imported.

The organisation of supplies for all requirements of the Defence Services has been the task of the specially created Supply Department of the Government of India which places war orders to the value of millions of pounds a month.

The shipbuilding industry has now over 30,000 men engaged on repair work and on the construction of naval vessels. No aircraft industry existed in India at the outbreak of war. But with the help of American material factories have been established for the assembly of certain types, for repairs and the manufacture of component parts. Their number is now being increased under a directorate-general of aircraft, created in October 1943.

There has been the same rapid development in nearly every field: for instance, India is producing nearly 60 per cent of her medical stores as compared with 25 per cent when the war began, besides almost all kinds of surgical instruments and hospital appliances.

The cotton textile industry has been able to provide for all India's war needs and to send considerable supplies to China and the Middle East, while the whole of the woollen industry is engaged on war supplies. Handlooms alone have provided over 2 million blankets. In the manufacture of army clothing India can now produce about 12 million garments and over a hundred thousand sets of web equipment a month, and boots at the rate of 4 million pairs a year. Allied troops in North Africa wore clothes made in India and marched in boots from Indian factories. Nearly 90 per cent of their tents and ground sheets came from India. The Indian mills are supplying U.S. troops in India with tropical clothing under Lease-lend arrangements.

The jute factories have produced a number of sandbags which runs into thousands of millions since the outbreak of war; and there are new jute manufactures—camouflage netting, anti-gas fabrics, and cotton-jute canvas.

In order to provide the technical training and the skilled workmen required for new war industries, the Labour Department has opened over 300 training centres, which can train 40,000 men at a time and through which thousands have already passed. Several batches of young men, commonly known as 'Bevin boys', have been sent to England for training in British factories, and a number of specialist instructors have been sent out from Britain. India has a Purchasing Mission in the United States to obtain certain essential equipment for her new factories, while a Lease-lend Mission has visited India as well as Technical Missions to give advice on the organisation of production.

Apart from her manufactures India is contributing more and more of her agricultural and mineral products of all kinds to the war effort. Her oil-seeds are an invaluable source of fats; her timber is in greatly increased demand since the loss of the Burma forests; her rubber is producing a large proportion of her motor tyres; over a million tons of her coal have been shipped overseas; she has supplied large quantities of pig-iron and of manganese; and her mica provides for almost the whole needs of both Britain and of America.

With the entry of Japan into the war India prepared for aerial attack, and her A.R.P. and fire-fighting services were greatly expanded, especially in coastal areas. Women as well as men are taking part in civil defence. Women are working for the Red Cross and Red Crescent, especially in providing comforts of all kinds for the troops; they are also working in the nursing services, though the supply of nurses still falls far short of the need. More than 5000 women have joined the Women's Auxiliary Corps, formed in 1942, to replace men as telephone and wireless operators, clerks, etc. Women doctors are being accepted on the same terms as men for the Indian Medical Service.

India has subscribed generously to all the funds connected with the war effort, or raised on behalf of war sufferers. Up to July 1943 over 6½ million pounds had been given to the Viceroy's War Purposes Fund; of this about half, besides many other gifts, was contributed by the Indian States. In addition, the peoples of India have subscribed another 4½ millions for the purchase of planes for the Indian Air Force and the Royal Air Force. No less than twenty squadrons of the R.A.F. bear the names of the Provinces and States which have provided them.

Such is the remarkable part that India is playing in the war, notwithstanding the depressing influence of the Congress policy. At the same time the war has created new problems. It has brought new and severe strains on India's economic, financial and constitutional structure, starkly revealed by the recent famine in Bengal and parts of Southern India. The famine was due less to any shortage of total food supplies (in spite of the loss of the rice normally imported from Burma) than to failure of the administration at an early stage to adopt a comprehensive policy of price control, and thus to check inflation, and the profiteering which follows in its train. As a consequence the price of food grains, where supplies were short, soared entirely beyond the reach of a large body of consumers. Some hundreds of thousands of poor people died from starvation and disease in Bengal. Only most drastic measures averted a similar calamity in the States of Travancore and Cochin.

Some Provinces had a surplus of food grains during 1943, but lack of effective control of distribution, transport, and supply, and lack of cooperation between the Central and the self-governing Provincial governments all contributed to the disaster. The suffering of the victims made plain as never before how narrow is the margin of the present food production of India above the amount required for bare subsistence by the growing millions of her people.

It also demonstrated clearly the interdependence of the various

regions of India, and the paramount need for economic co-operation on an All-India basis. Lord Wavell has declared his Government's firm intention of adopting a food policy for the whole of India based on control of prices and rationing of the large towns, for which the willing cooperation of Provinces and States will be needed.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, in spite of setbacks, India's great war effort continues with gathering momentum. The headquarters of the South East Asia Command is in Delhi, and it is obvious that India will be a principal base of operations against Japan. Indian production is likely to play an increasingly important part in the whole supply of the armies of the east.

When the war is over India will possess impressive additions to her industrial organisation and equipment. Her fighting forces and her economic contribution have together given her a very special place in the struggle of the United Nations, a place due to a country of her great size and importance. And when victory comes, if only she can find cooperation and peace within her own borders, she will have a still greater part to play in the rebuilding of the civilised world.

<sup>1</sup> 20 December 1943. See also p. 46 for earlier measures taken to prevent famine.

## CHAPTER XI

### POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF THE WAR YEARS

THE political deadlock which ensued after the resignation of the Congress ministries in October 1939 unhappily still continues. All the efforts to bring the great political parties of British India into a war-time government—and there have been many, made by the British Cabinet, by Lord Linlithgow as Viceroy, and by a 'non-party' group led by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru—have failed. No settlement has been reached between Government, Congress, and the Moslem League, or any two of them. On the contrary there has been a serious deterioration in their mutual relations during the last four years, accompanied by an increasing sense of bitterness and frustration.

It is only natural that it should be galling to India, at this great crisis in the world's history, not to be able to play her part with the same freedom as other countries, and there is much sympathy in Britain both with the Indian desire for complete self-government and with Indian impatience.

In order to understand a situation which causes deep and widespread concern both in Britain and in America it will be necessary to review very briefly the main developments since the summer of 1940.

It will be seen that the attitude of Congress has changed from that taken at the beginning of the war. For nearly three years no action was sanctioned which would embarrass the war effort. But the policy was then changed to one of mass non-cooperation with the deliberate intention of paralysing the whole administration. And during the war years the attitude of the Moslem League has stiffened and its demand for Pakistan and the partition of India has become more and more insistent, in spite of the many practical difficulties of the Pakistan scheme. Each fresh declaration

of Congress has been followed by a new statement from the League, lest Government should show any sign of adopting a policy of 'appeasement' and yielding to Congress demands. The gulf between the two parties has widened still further. And though the League by no means represents all Moslems, it has developed under Mr Jinnah's leadership into a powerful political organisation which can speak for the majority, with a discipline as strict as that of Congress. At the by-elections in Moslem constituencies held since the general elections of 1937, 51 out of 65 were won by candidates of the Moslem League.

It must be pointed out that, although the League has not been cooperating officially, its members have been freely helping in the war as individuals. On the other hand, the whole membership of the Congress party has held aloof from the war effort ever since the beginning of hostilities. For Mr Gandhi non-violence is the very essence of his creed and he would not abandon it even for the independence of India. And the effective leadership of Congress has been his, except during two brief periods when the non-pacifist section, led by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, gained temporary ascendancy in the Working Committee. We return to the story in detail.

It was during the first of the periods referred to above, at the time of Britain's great peril in 1940, that Congress passed a resolution at Poona that if Government made an 'unequivocal' declaration of 'full independence' as distinct from Dominion Status, coupled with the formation of a provisional National Government at the Centre, Congress would 'throw its full weight' into the organisation of defence.

A few weeks later Lord Linlithgow, in a speech on 8 August, made what is called his 'August Offer'. In it he repeated the pledge of full Dominion Status, and conceded that the future constitution should be framed primarily by Indians themselves (with guarantees for minorities); he appealed to all to cooperate in the war effort, and he invited representatives of the great parties to join his Executive Council in a war-time Government.



Congress rejected these proposals outright. But the Moslem League would at that time have been prepared to cooperate, if the League had been offered numerical equality with Congress in the Viceroy's Council, and been promised that the Pakistan scheme would be considered after the war.

After the refusal of the Viceroy's offer, Mr Gandhi was recalled to leadership by Congress and decided (in September 1940) to inaugurate civil disobedience on a limited scale. Selected members of Congress were asked publicly to denounce India's participation in the war, and deliberately to court arrest under the Defence of India rules. Many former ministers of the Congress governments and many members of the legislatures went to prison, and later ordinary members of Congress were also accepted as *satyagrahis* (non-violent resisters). In May, 1941, over 13,000 were in gaol. But many Congressmen were considerably affected by the German attack on Russia, and wished to abandon even 'symbolic' civil disobedience. The movement flagged, and in December the remaining *satyagrahis* still in prison (together with Pandit Nehru) were released.

Meanwhile Lord Linlithgow, having failed to secure the co-operation of the main parties, proceeded (in July 1941) with the Indianisation of his Executive Council. He added to it a number of representative Indians, so that for the first time the Council had a large majority of Indian over British members, though the key-portfolios of Defence and Home Affairs were retained in British hands. At the same time a National Defence Council was created.

With the entry of Japan into the war, in December 1941, the non-pacifist section of Congress was greatly strengthened. Several of the leaders besides Pandit Nehru, including the President of the party, Maulana Azad, and Mr Rajagopalachari, one of the most successful of the Congress premiers, were anxious to take their share in armed resistance to any attempt at invasion. Civil disobedience based on non-violence again ceased to be the official policy of the Congress party, and Mr Gandhi again retired from the leadership.

Lest this action should lead to any concession to Congress, the Moslem League, at the end of 1941, issued a warning to 'the British public and Government' that 'any revision of policy which adversely affects the demand for Pakistan, or proceeds on the basis of a Central Government with India as one single unit... will be strongly resented by the Moslems who will be compelled to resist it with all the forces at their command'.

In many quarters hopes of a settlement rose high for a brief space when Sir Stafford Cripps flew to Delhi, in March 1942, with a new Declaration on behalf of the British Government. It proposed (1) the creation of an Indian Union constituting a Dominion equal in every respect to the other Dominions of the Commonwealth; (2) the framing of a new constitution immediately after the war by a body of Indians elected by Indians; (3) an invitation to the States to participate, with the proviso that (4) should any State or any Province not be prepared to join the new Union, it should have the right to conclude a separate agreement with Britain. In the meantime Government invited the leaders of the great political parties to join the Viceroy's government for the period of the war.

The discussions began not unfavourably and in an atmosphere of goodwill, though the leaders of the two great parties met only Sir Stafford and never met one another. Agreement with the Congress party seemed at last in sight, when suddenly—on the interpretation of a 'National Government' for the war period—the negotiations broke down. Congress said that it must be 'a Cabinet Government with full power', in which the Viceroy would no longer retain his overruling powers, but Sir Stafford declared this to be impossible 'without constitutional changes of a most complicated character'.

There can be no doubt that at this time the outstanding initial successes of Japan, the loss of Singapore, and the rapid Japanese advance in Burma had imbued the pacifist section of Congress with a spirit of defeatism in respect of the war. British prestige was at its lowest, and Mr Gandhi had lost faith in a British victory.

He regarded the Cripps offer, to use his own words, as 'a post-dated cheque on a crashing bank'. Though he took no direct part in the negotiations, Congress could not fail to be influenced by the knowledge of his views. Whenever there have been differences between him and Pandit Nehru, it has been Gandhi's opinion which has finally prevailed. Pandit Nehru himself said a month or two earlier, 'There has never been and can be no break with him, for he represents the mind and heart of our people as no one else can'.

In the end all parties, Congress, the Moslem League, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Depressed Classes, the Sikhs, rejected the Cripps proposals, though for very different reasons. The Moslem League rejected them because Pakistan was not definitely conceded, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Sikhs because it was not definitely ruled out; the Depressed Classes demanded protection from an 'unmitigated system of Hindu rule'. But the widespread disappointment in the country and in the press showed clearly that the policy of the leaders did not represent the feelings of the general public able to read and take an interest in affairs.

The Cripps Mission failed—but the Declaration stands as a pledge. It defines the policy of the British Government for the future of India. It marks a great new advance, the end of trusteeship and the recognition of a new era, the era of equal partnership. To India is offered exactly the same freedom and independence as other Dominions enjoy, with the same power to secede from the Commonwealth, should she so desire.

Nevertheless the melancholy fact must be faced that the Cripps Mission only produced in India added bitterness against Britain and a deeper sense of frustration. It seems an irony of fate that, while previous steps on the road to self-government came too late to give satisfaction to nationalist India, the proposals for the final transfer of power found Indians, owing to their own internal divisions, unready to seize the opportunities offered.

Only Mr Rajagopalachari, former premier of Madras, and one of the most able and realist of the Congress leaders, urged that to

obtain the transfer of power from Britain there must first be agreement between Congress and the Moslem League. Having tried in vain to convert Congress to his views, he resigned from the party.

Meanwhile Mr Gandhi, again in undisputed leadership, developed, during the spring and summer of 1942, a new line of policy in a series of articles in his journal *Harijan*, and in interviews with American correspondents. This is known as the 'Quit India' policy. The policy of non-embarrassment of the war effort was completely abandoned. Mr Gandhi decided to stake all on what he called 'the last struggle of my life', and to demand 'the immediate withdrawal of British rule from India', adding 'Let them entrust India to God or in modern parlance to anarchy'.

The 'Quit India' Resolution was carried by the Congress Working Committee in July 1942 with the assent of pacifists and non-pacifists alike. Outside Congress the Resolution roused general dissent and dismay, for the proposal was for the withdrawal of Government without any arrangement for its replacement, and the alternative to the immediate withdrawal of British rule was to be mass civil disobedience. 'There is no room left for negotiation', said Mr Gandhi, 'Either they recognise India's independence or they don't....There is no question of "one more chance"....This is open rebellion....I conceive of a mass movement on the widest possible scale.' Though in Mr Gandhi's plans it was to be a rebellion of a purely non-violent character, it was clearly his design to paralyse the administration, regardless of the effect on the conduct of the war or of the security of India.

On 9 August 1942, immediately after the decision to embark on this policy was endorsed by the All-India Congress Committee, Mr Gandhi and the entire Working Committee were arrested by the unanimous decision of the Viceroy and his Council. The arrest of the leaders was followed by outbreaks of sabotage and serious disorder over a wide area. There were attacks on communications and damage to police stations, post-offices, and

other Government buildings, especially in regions like Bihar, economically vital to the war effort. Altogether 318 railway stations, 309 post-offices, 192 police-stations, and 494 other Government buildings were badly damaged; but the police and civil officers stood faithfully by their posts in face of all danger. By the end of September order had been almost restored, but nearly a thousand persons had been killed in conflict with the troops and the police. Arrests were made on a large scale. In October 1943, besides convicted prisoners, approximately 8,000 persons remained in detention without trial under the defence regulations.

All the other parties held aloof from the 'rebellion'. The Moslem League, while condemning it, declared that Moslems were no less insistent on the attainment of independence than Congress. They called upon the British Government 'to pledge themselves that they will abide by the verdict of the plebiscite of Musalmans and give effect to the Pakistan scheme'.

There has been no abandonment by Congress of the civil disobedience policy.<sup>1</sup> In February 1943, six months after his detention, Mr Gandhi began the ninth fast of his career as a sequel to a long correspondence with the Viceroy. It was not to be a 'fast to death', but a 'fast to capacity' for 21 days. It aroused a wave of emotion throughout India and elsewhere, but under careful medical attention Mr Gandhi survived the ordeal. For any political purpose the fast proved abortive.

The deadlock therefore remains unresolved, distrust and suspicion unrelieved. Congress does not believe that Britain is sincere in her desire to part with power. The British Government does not believe that the Congress leaders could be trusted with responsibility for conducting the war effort. The Moslem League fears a surrender by Government to Congress demands and the ruling out of Pakistan.

In October 1943 Lord Linlithgow laid down the heavy burden of office as Viceroy which he had borne for seven difficult years, and was succeeded by Field-Marshal Lord Wavell.

<sup>1</sup> January 1944.

On the eve of his departure for India Lord Wavell said that he took with him the knowledge that all classes and sections of opinion in Britain were united in a desire to assist India to full freedom. Moreover there is a very general feeling—voiced in both Houses of Parliament—that the British Government should not be content to wait on events to bring about a more hopeful state of affairs. In the words of Lord Hailey, who has unrivalled experience of Indian administration, speaking in the House of Lords, 'We are committed beyond any recall to give self-government to India and it is only by moving forward that we can convince India and the rest of the world of the honesty of the intention that prompted the [Cripps] Declaration'.

In his first public speech<sup>1</sup> since he became Viceroy, Lord Wavell appealed for cooperation in the tasks which should be common to all when the country is in peril. He emphasised that, although political differences could not be solved by administrative action, cooperation in common aims would do much to produce conditions in which a solution of the deadlock would be possible.

It is important to remember that Britain and India are passing through a difficult period in their relationship, a period of transition which has accentuated the differences between Britain and India as well as the differences between Indians and Indians, but that in retrospect this period will seem short in the history of the two countries.

All parties in India—Congress, Moslems, the Depressed Classes and the rest—are at one in their wish for India's freedom. Britain feels that for India not to be free is inconsistent with the principles for which she is fighting. In the new conception of the Commonwealth Britain stands not for the old imperialism but for a free association of the free peoples of the world.

All nations stand on the threshold of a new era. The war has made it abundantly clear that none can afford to stand alone, that independence means nothing without external security.

<sup>1</sup> 20 December 1943.

Therefore both in Britain and in India let us work for the time when the bitterness of past struggles will be forgotten, so that our two nations—who share so many common ideals, who by their common efforts during nearly 200 years have built up the India of to-day and whose lives have become so intimately linked during their long association—may enter on a new relationship based on greater friendship, better collaboration, and truer understanding than ever before.

# APPENDIX

## TABLES

### I. AREAS AND POPULATIONS OF PROVINCES AND LARGER STATES

(Census of 1941)

	Area in square miles	Population (to nearest thousand)
<b>ALL INDIA</b>	<b>1,581,410</b>	<b>388,998,000</b>
<b>I. Provinces of British India</b>	<b>865,446</b>	<b>295,809,000</b>
Assam	54,951	10,205,000
Bengal	77,442	60,307,000
Bihar	69,745	36,340,000
Bombay	76,443	20,850,000
Central Provinces and Berar	98,575	16,814,000
Madras	126,166	49,342,000
North-West Frontier Province	14,263	3,038,000
Orissa	32,198	8,729,000
Punjab	99,089	28,419,000
Sind	48,136	4,535,000
United Provinces	106,247	55,021,000
<b>II. States and Agencies (Total)</b>	<b>715,964</b>	<b>93,189,000</b>
Hyderabad	82,313	16,339,000
Mysore	29,458	7,329,000
Travancore	7,662	6,070,000
Kashmir	82,258	4,022,000
Gwalior	26,008	4,006,000
Baroda	8,236	2,855,000
States of Rajputana	132,559	13,670,000

*Note.* The six single States mentioned by name are those with the largest populations.



## 2. INCREASE IN TOTAL POPULATION OF INDIA

(Census of 1941)

Census	Population (to nearest million)	Increase (to nearest million)	Percentage increase
1891	279 millions	29 millions	11·8
1901	284 "	4 "	1·2
1911	303 "	19 "	6·7
1921	306 "	3 "	0·9
1931	338 "	32 "	10·6
1941	389 "	51 "	15·0

## 3. RURAL AND URBAN POPULATIONS

(Census of 1941)

Number of towns of not less than 5000 inhabitants	2703	Number of villages	655,892
Number of towns of over 100,000 inhabitants	58	Number of villages of under 500 inhabitants	450,903
Population of towns (to nearest million)	50 millions	Population of villages (to nearest million)	339 millions
Percentages of total population	Urban 12·8%		Rural 87·2%

#### 4. POPULATION OF THE TWENTY LARGEST TOWNS IN INDIA

(Census of 1941)

	Population (to nearest thousand)
1. Calcutta (Bengal)	2,109,000
2. Bombay (Bombay)	1,489,000
3. Madras (Madras)	777,000
4. Hyderabad (Hyderabad State)	739,000
5. Lahore (Punjab)	672,000
6. Ahmedabad (Bombay)	591,000
7. Delhi (Delhi)	522,000
8. Cawnpore (United Provinces)	487,000
9. Amritsar (Punjab)	391,000
10. Lucknow (United Provinces)	387,000
11. Howrah (Bengal)	379,000
12. Karachi (Sind)	359,000
13. Nagpur (Central Provinces)	302,000
14. Agra (United Provinces)	284,000
15. Benares (United Provinces)	263,000
16. Allahabad (United Provinces)	261,000
17. Poona (Bombay)	258,000
18. Bangalore (Mysore State)	248,000
19. Madura (Madras)	239,000
20. Dacca (Bengal)	213,000

#### 5. THE POPULATION OF INDIA BY COMMUNITIES

(Census of 1941)

Hindus	255 millions
including Scheduled Castes 49 millions	
Moslems	94½ millions
Christians	7½ millions
including Anglo-Indians 140,000	
Europeans 135,000	
Sikhs	5½ millions
Jains	1½ millions
Buddhists	232,000
Parsees	115,000
Jews	22,000
Tribes	25 millions

Of the Tribal Community it is estimated that about 8 millions profess Tribal religions, while approximately 1 million may be regarded as Christians (included in the 7½ millions above) and about 16 millions as adherents to some form of the Hindu faith.

## 6. PROGRESS OF LITERACY

(Provisional record calculated from the Census of 1941 and the Census Abstract of Tables)

It should be noted that the percentages given below are of the *whole* population, including children from birth, and are taken from the provisional returns for 1941 and the final returns for 1931. Figures for literates aged 5 and over were recorded in the 1931 Census, but have not been taken out for 1941.

There are certain small inconsistencies between the provisional figures for literates in 1941 and the percentages given below, but the differences are slight.

	Percentage of literacy 1941			Percent- age of literacy 1931	Percentage increase 1931-41		
	Males	Females	Both sexes		Both sexes	Males	Females
<b>ALL INDIA</b>	19	5	12.2	6.9	70	60	150
Provinces, etc. of British India	18.6	6.4	12.5	7.1	—	—	—
States	17.1	5.1	11.1	6.6	—	—	—
<b>PROVINCES (P) AND STATES (S):</b>							
Travancore (S) <sup>1</sup>	58.6	36.8	47.7	23.3	—	—	—
Cochin (S)	44.4	26.4	35.4	28.1	—	—	—
Baroda (S)	33.5	12.5	23.0	17.8	—	—	—
Bombay (P)	30	9	19.5	9.9	110	100	230
Bengal (P)	25	7	16.1	9.4	70	60	130
Madras (P)	20.4	5.6	13.0	9.8	40	30	120
Punjab (P)	18.8	7	12.9	5.3	140	110	390
Mysore (S)	19.6	4.8	12.2	9.1	—	—	—
Central Provinces (P)	18.8	4.6	11.7	4.0	—	—	—
Assam (P)	19.3	3.7	11.5	7.7	—	—	—
Orissa (P) <sup>2</sup>	19.4	2.4	10.9	—	—	—	—
Sind (P)	16.4	4.4	10.4	5.9	—	—	—
Bihar (P) <sup>2</sup>	17.2	2.2	9.7	—	—	—	—
United Provinces (P)	14.4	2.4	8.4	4.7	80	70	170
N.W. Frontier Province (P) <sup>3</sup>	—	—	7.7	4.1	—	—	—
Gwalior (S) <sup>3</sup>	—	—	7.4	4.0	—	—	—
Hyderabad (S)	11.5	2.1	6.8	4.1	70	60	130
Kashmir (S)	11.0	2.2	6.6	3.4	100	80	330
Punjab States (S)	10.3	1.9	6.1	3.6	—	—	—
Delhi	35.8	15.6	25.7	14.1	—	—	—

<sup>1</sup> It is pointed out that the 1931 figure for Travancore is misleading, as a higher standard of literacy was taken than elsewhere. The actual increase for 1931-41 for both sexes is estimated at 49%.

<sup>2</sup> Owing to the separation of Orissa from Bihar since the Census of 1931, comparable figures are not available.

<sup>3</sup> Separate figures according to sex are not yet available.

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